

THE INCREDIBLE HULK



JOHNSON
EARLS
KLEIN
WALKER
WILSON

GODS DRINK BLOOD

MARVEL

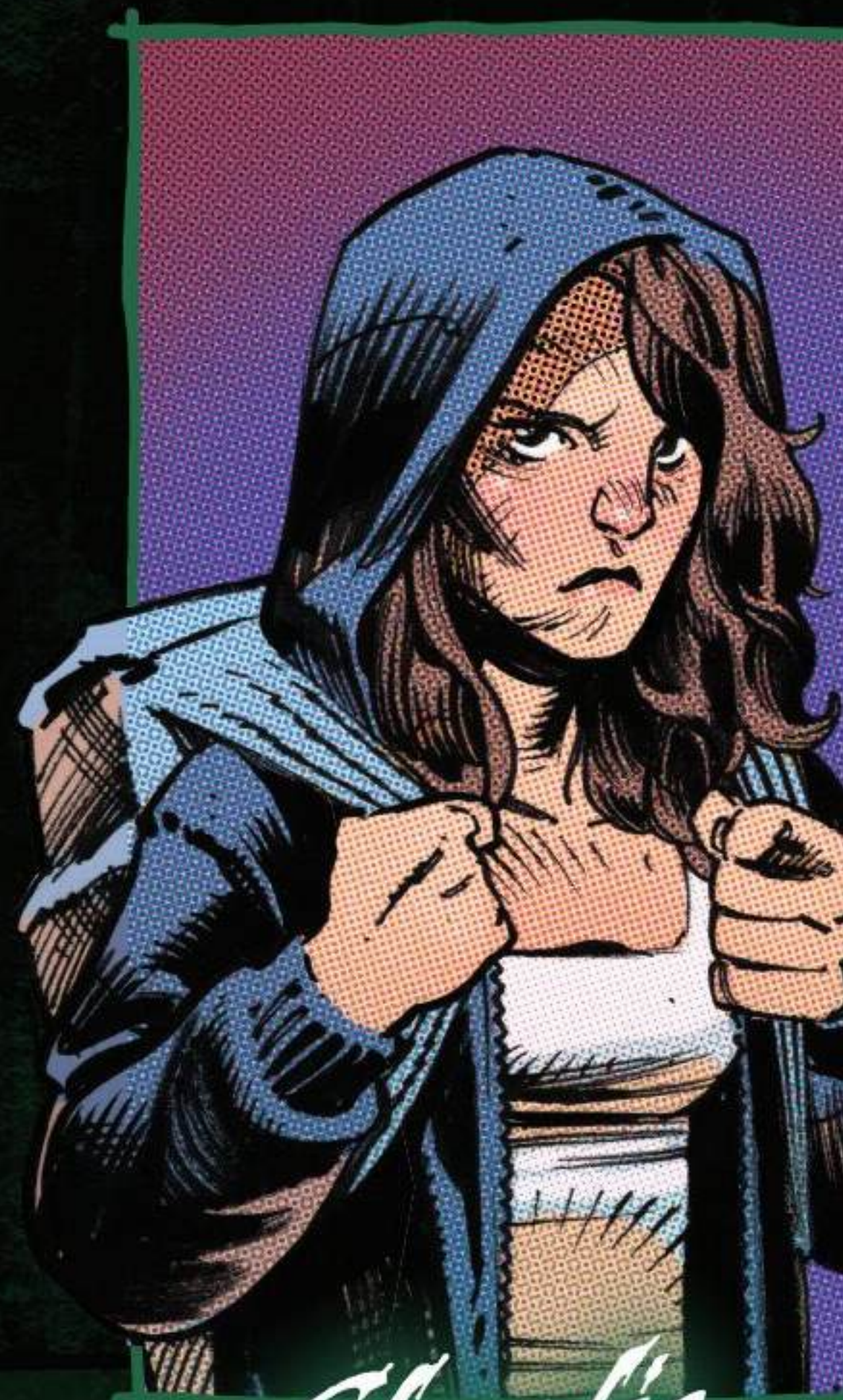
THE INCREDIBLE HULK

*GODS DRINK
BLOOD*





Hulk



Charlie

Led by a primordial being called Eldest, monsters all over the world are hunting the Hulk to use him to awaken an entity known as the Mother of Horrors. One such monster trapped the soul of Hulk's traveling companion, teenage runaway Charlie, in a magical figurine! To restore Charlie to living flesh, Hulk is headed to the city of Las Vegas where he is told a power exists that can accomplish this feat. But Bruce learns a terrifying truth while trapped within his own mind, the Hulscape — the only being capable of saving Charlie is Eldest itself. The monster's price? Bruce must betray the Hulk once and for all!

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BRUCE BANNER IS A MAN CONSTANTLY AT WAR WITH HIMSELF, FOR WITHIN HIM IS THE GREEN, RAGE-FUELED, GAMMA-POWERED FORCE OF NATURE KNOWN AS THE HULK. NOW THE HULK'S RAGE IS POINTED AT BRUCE, HUNGRY TO TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR SHARED BODY ONCE AND FOR ALL. BRUCE LIVES A LIFE ON THE RUN TO PROTECT THE REST OF THE WORLD FROM...

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

GODS DRINK BLOOD

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BELOW LAS VEGAS.

IT'S
REAL.

WE
FOUND
IT.

NICO,
HOW'D YOU
LEARN ABOUT
THIS PLACE?

OLD GABE
SPOKE OF IT. SAID
IT WAS IN THE DEEPEST
PART OF THE CAVE...
FORGOTTEN BY
EVERYBODY BUT
HIM.

I--I DON'T
LIKE IT, MAN. WE
WERE TOLD NEVER
TO COME DOWN
HERE.

I DON'T
THINK **LYCANA**
WOULD WANT
US TO--

SHUT UP.
LYCANA'S GONE
NOW.

WE CAME TO **LYCANA** SO WE COULD
KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE
WORSHIPPED. STRONG.
BEAUTIFUL.

SOMEONE
STOLE THAT
FROM US.





W-WHY
DID YOU DO
THAT?!

WITH
THIS BLOOD,
WE HONOR
YOU.



GUYS!
H-HELP
ME!!!

WITH
THIS FLESH,
WE NOURISH
YOU.



PLEASE!!!
PLEASE, DON'T
DO THIS!

WITH THIS
OFFERING
WE SUMMON
YOU...



...VÂRCOLAC,
ANCIENT FATHER
OF THE WOLF
LORDS.

RETURN TO
US THE SKIN OF
LYCANA...

RRRRRRLLLLL



...AND BRING
VENGEANCE UPON
OUR TRESPASSERS.

EY YAAAAAGGH





SEE THAT?
AWESOME, RIGHT?



HEH.



HRRM.
HRRM.

PUNY OIL...
THING.



CHARLIE
SMASH.



HEH.

C'MON,
HULK.



YOU THINK
IT'LL ALWAYS BE
THIS WAY?



SHE'S A
MONSTER
NOW, LIKE
US.

YOU
KNOW WHERE
THIS LEADS.



SHE'LL LEARN
THE **COST** OF THAT
STRENGTH. MAYBE IN A
YEAR, MAYBE
TOMORROW, BUT
SHE'LL LEARN.



AND WHEN
SHE DOES,
IT'LL BE **YOUR**
FAULT.



HULK.
HULK, LOOK
AT THIS.

I
CAN--



...HULK?



WHATEVER.



CHPPP



WOO-
HOOOOO!

KING
O' THE--

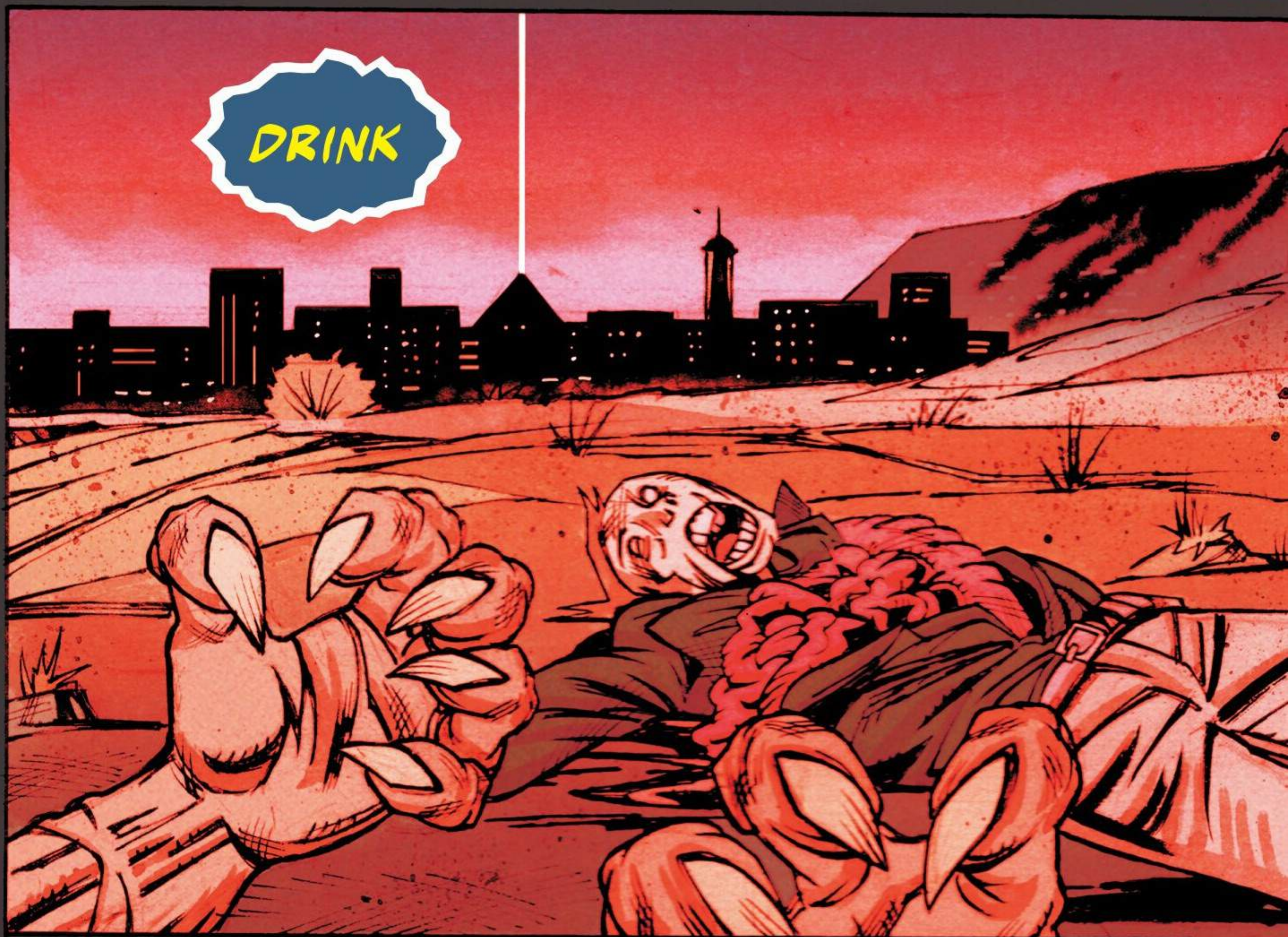
BLOOD



AAH!
WHAT...?



SWIP



DO YOU
KNOW HOW
EASY YOU ARE
TO TRACK?

YOUR SCENT'S
LIKE A **STREAK OF
NEON GREEN** IN A
BLACK-AND-WHITE
WORLD.

WH--WHO
THE HELL ARE
YOU?

MY NAME'S
JACK. I CAME
TO WARN YOU.

LYCANA'S
PACK IS BOUND
TO LAS VEGAS. YOU'VE
BROKEN YOUR PACT.
GET BACK TO YOUR
TURF, OR IT'LL GO
BADLY FOR YOU.

I'M **NOT**
ONE OF THEM. I
DON'T ANSWER TO
THEM, OR YOU, OR
ANYBODY.

"NOT ONE
OF THEM,"
EH?

I **KNOW**
A SKINWALKER
WHEN I SMELL
ONE.

AND I
KNOW THE SIGNS
WHEN A MONSTER
NEEDS TO
FEED.

WANT TO
KNOW HOW
I KNOW?

GO
AHEAD,
GIRL.

ASK ME.

GGRRRRRR

OH NO...

WHATEVER WILL I DO?

A MONSTER.

...ME.

NNRRRAAUGH

CRACK

I'M JUST A KID, RIGHT?

POOOM

POOR...

...HELPLESS...

...LITTLE OL'...

SHRECKK

SSSHRRRIIP

SPLOR



YOU'RE NOT JUST A SKINWALKER. YOU'RE THE SKINWALKER.

YOU'RE WEARING LYCANA'S SKIN ITSELF. DO YOU EVEN KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?!

I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU.



LYCANA'S VESSELS GET ONE CYCLE OF THE MOON. THEY HUNT, THEY FEED, THEY'RE WORSHIPPED...AND THEN THEY'RE SACRIFICED TO THE PACK.

THE OTHERS WILL BE COMING FOR YOU.

YEAH?



DO I LOOK SCARED?



YOU DON'T
EXPECT TO SEE
ANYONE IN A
PLACE LIKE
THIS.

LET ALONE
WHATEVER
YOU ARE.



AREN'T YOU
ONE OF THOSE
REVENGERS, OR
X-PEOPLE OR
WHATEVER?

WHAT'RE
YOU DOING
OUT **HERE**?



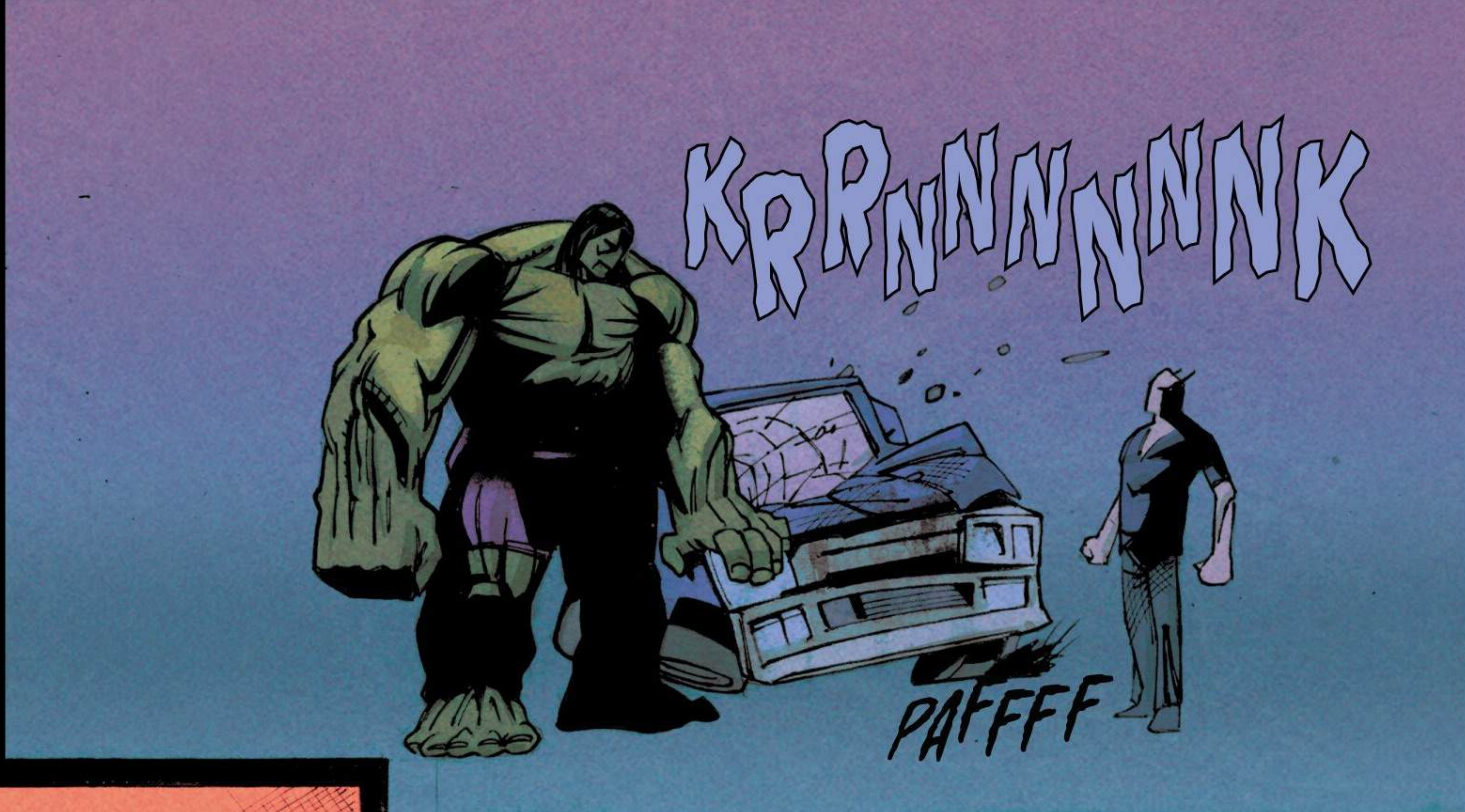
LEAVING.

POOM
POOM
POOM



YOU'RE NOT
AS BIG AS YOU
LOOK ON TV.

WHAT DO YOU
DO WHEN YOU'RE UP
AGAINST SOMETHING
REALLY BIG?



MAKE IT
SMALL.



MOVE.



YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME.
OR ANY OF THE ONES YOU
LEFT BURIED UNDER
LAS VEGAS.

I SAID
MOVE.



LYCANA'S SKIN
SHOULD'VE BEEN
MINE.

YOU HAVE NO
IDEA THE THINGS
I'VE DONE TO WEAR
THAT SKIN. TO BE
WORSHIPPED.



WARNED YOU
ENOUGH.

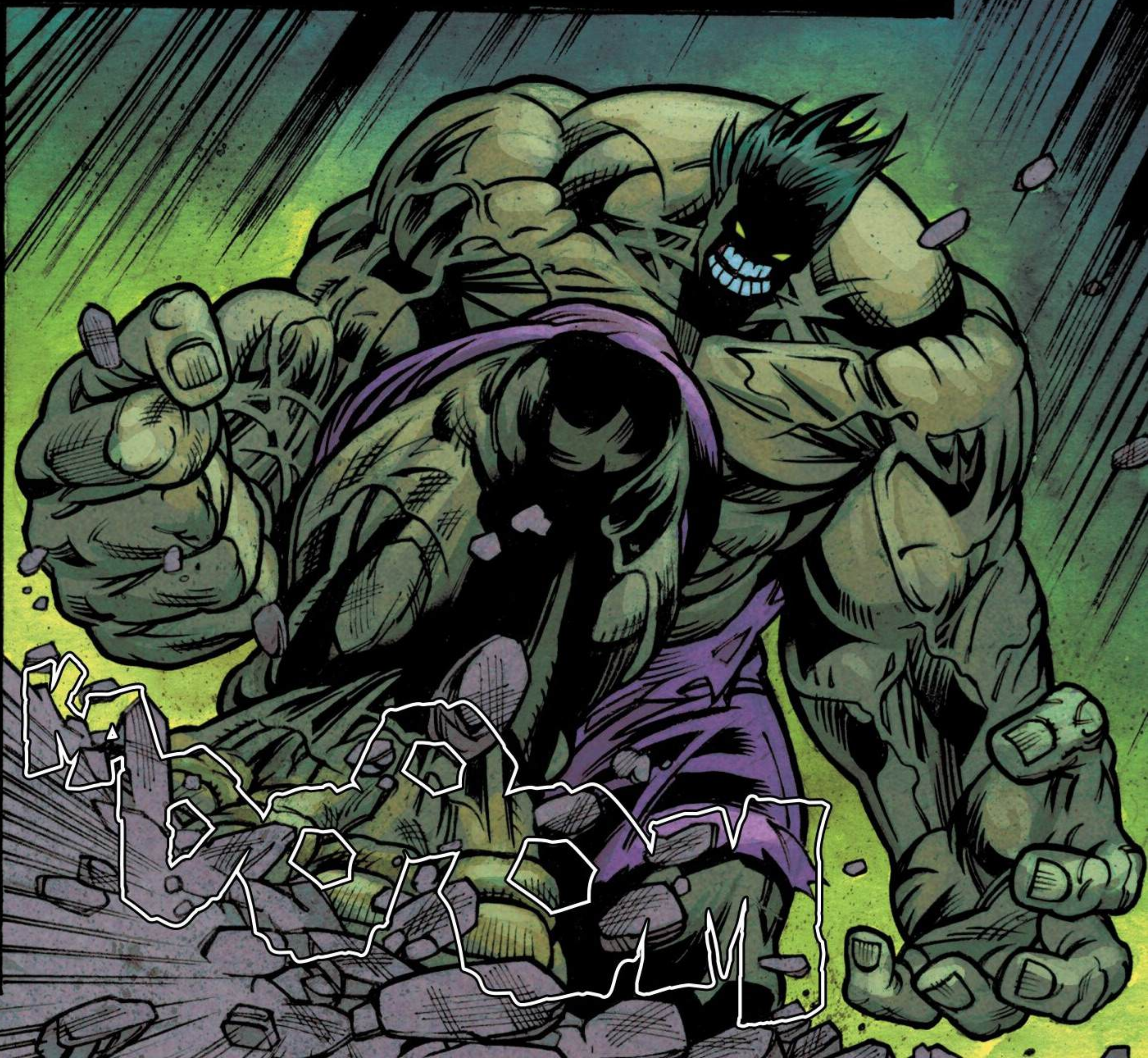




YOU
TOOK IT
FROM ME.



BUT IT
DOESN'T
MATTER. I HAVE A
NEW MASTER
N--





STUPID.

SHOULD'VE
LEFT US
ALONE.

POOM
POOM



KID.

KID,
WHERE
ARE--?

HHHH
HHHHH
HHHHH



KA-CRACK



HRRNN?

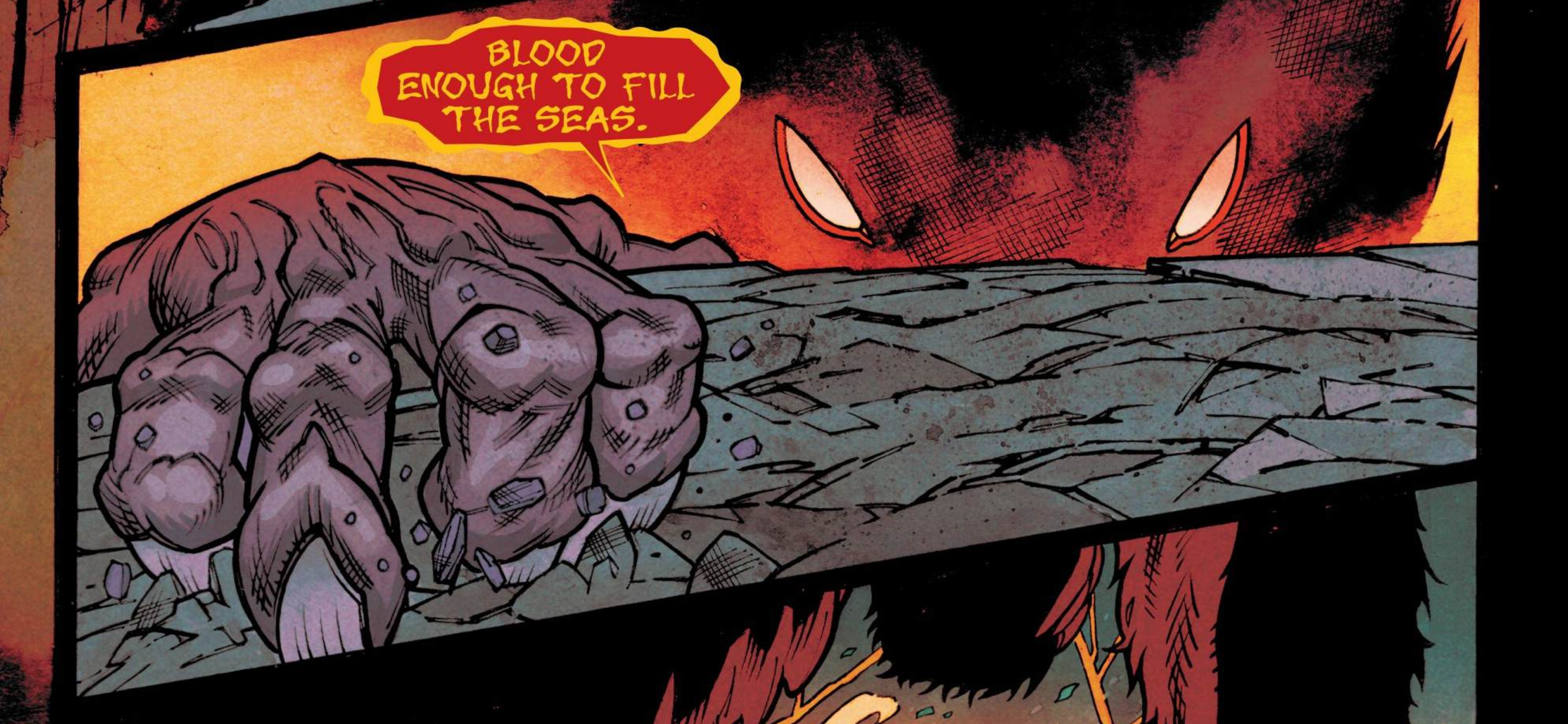


I CARE
NOTHING FOR
LYCANA OR HER
MEWLING
LITTER.



ONLY
BLOOD.

KRASH
KRAASH
KRAASH



BLOOD
ENOUGH TO FILL
THE SEAS.



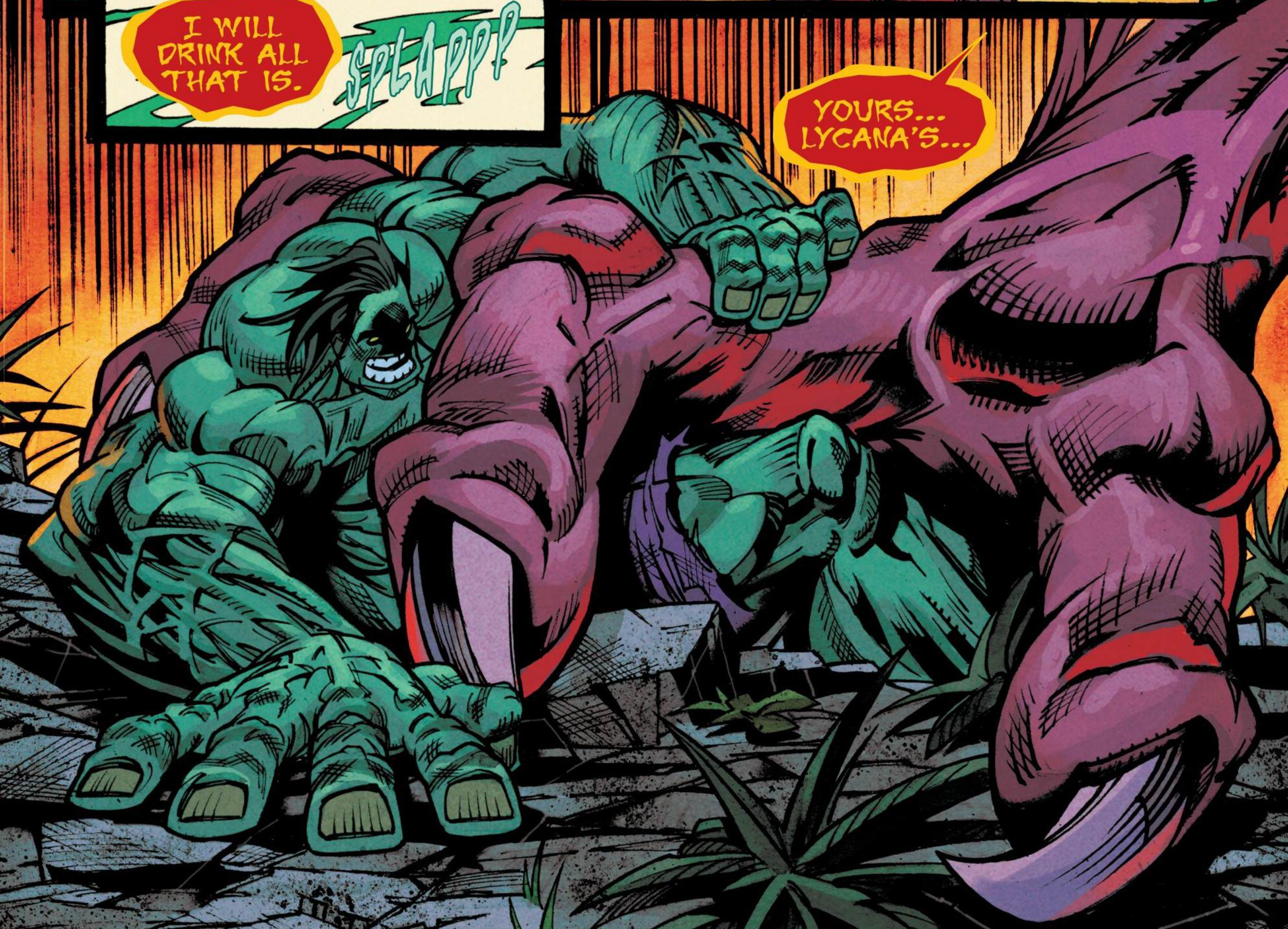
BLOOD
ENOUGH TO
DROWN THE
GODS.

I AM
VÂRCOLAC,
FATHER OF THE
WOLF LORDS...

...AND
YOUR BLOOD
IS MINE.







...AND ONE
DAY THE GODS'
THEMSELVES.



ENVY



GRUNCH
GRUNCH



RRRRLLLLLLL...

RRRIIPPP



GGRROOOOOO



CRACK

RRRRING.

KA-GRACK

SPLURCH





THOUGHT
YOU WERE
STRONGEST?



GGRRRRRRRRRR



NEARBY.

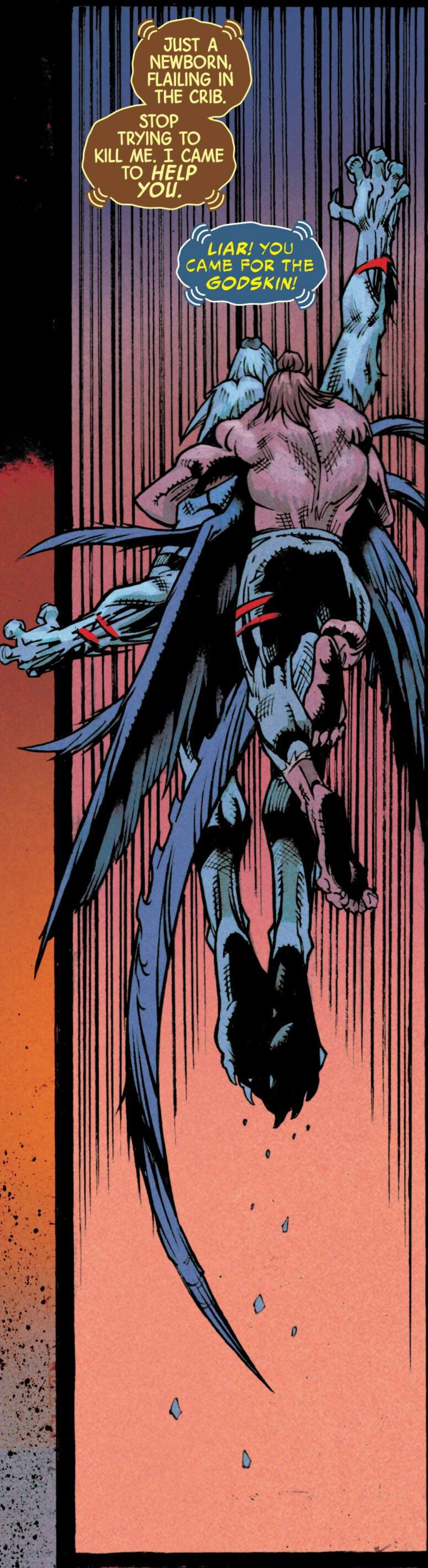
THIS IS
NOT THE FIGHT
YOU WANT,
GIRL.

I
THINK IT
IS.

GET
OUT OF MY
HEAD.

GGRRRR







THEN WHY
DID YOU COME
HERE?

TO WARN
YOU OF THE
THING THAT'S
HUNTING
YOU.

VÂRCOLAC.

EVEN IF
YOU AND YOUR
COMPANION
MANAGE TO KILL
IT...IT'S **MARKED**
YOU NOW.

IT WILL
NEVER STOP
HUNTING
YOU.



RRROOOAAAARRRR

KATHKOCKKYM



RAAADOONWLL



FTHOOOO

TOO LOUD.

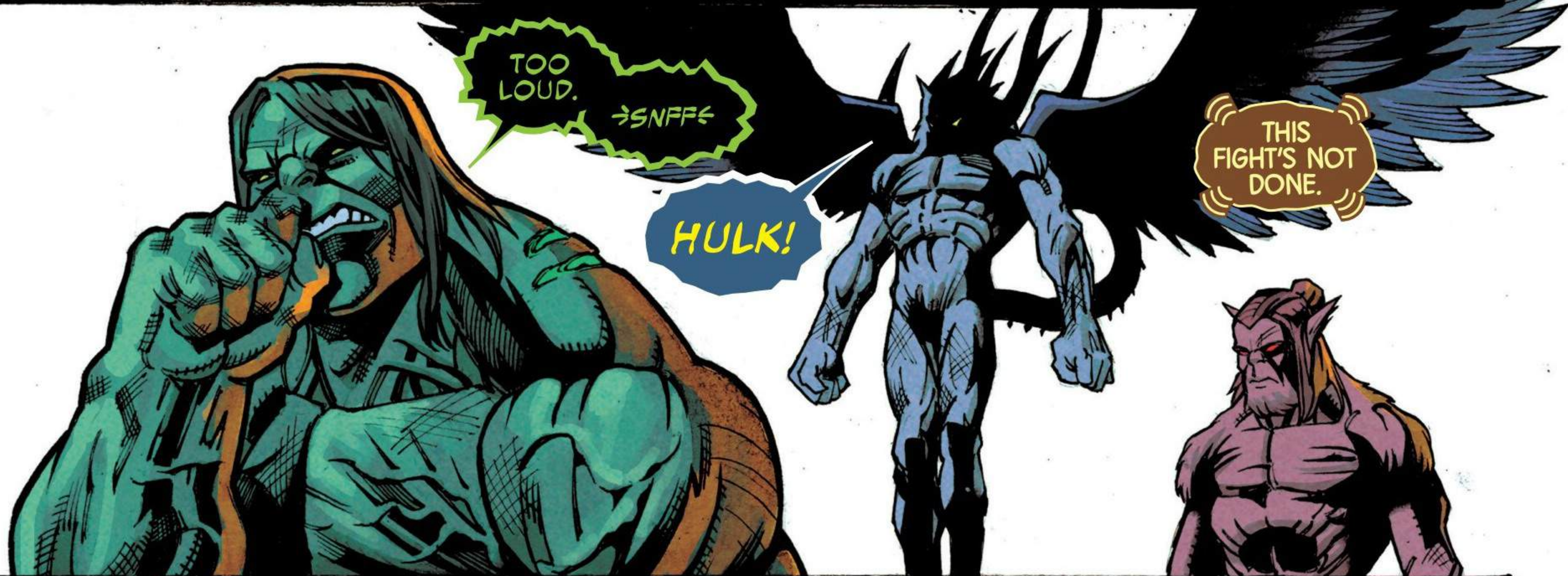
SPLAT

SHOULDN'T
BE SO LOUD.

ROOOAR

BAD
DOG.





*FROM LAST MONTH IN WEREWOLF BY NIGHT (2024) #5!



RRRRMMMMBBBBLL

YOUR
BLOOD IS
FAMILIAR,
FRACTURED
SON.

I KNEW
ANOTHER
OF YOUR
KIND.

HULK!

DON'T,
GIRL! THAT'S
VÂRCOLAC'S
DIMENSION!

WHEN
THE WAY
CLOSES...

...THERE'S
NO WAY
BACK!!!

LYCANA'S
NEW VESSEL
IS DEAR TO
YOU, EH?

WELCOME
TO HER
ETERNITY.



ALL
SPAWN OF
WOLF AND
MAN ARE
MINE.

THEIR
BLOOD IS
MINE.

THEIR
SOULS ARE
MINE.

FOR MY
OFFSPRING
AND PREY,
THERE IS NO
DEATH.

ONLY
TORMENT.



THE
BEAST
MEN.

THE
SCIONS OF THE
ARCTURUS.

THE
WOLF
LORDS OF
OLD.



ALL
WHO WEAR
LYCANA'S SKIN
ARE CONDEMNED
TO WRITHE
FOREVER IN MY
DEN OF THORN
AND FLAME.



DOES THIS
TROUBLE YOU,
FRACTURED SON?
THAT SUCH A
FATE AWAITS
YOUR MORTAL
CALF?



BE
GLADDENED.



YOU
WILL BEAR IT
TOGETHER.





...AND
FOREVER.

RRMMMMBBBBLL



RRRRNNNNNNNGGGGRRR





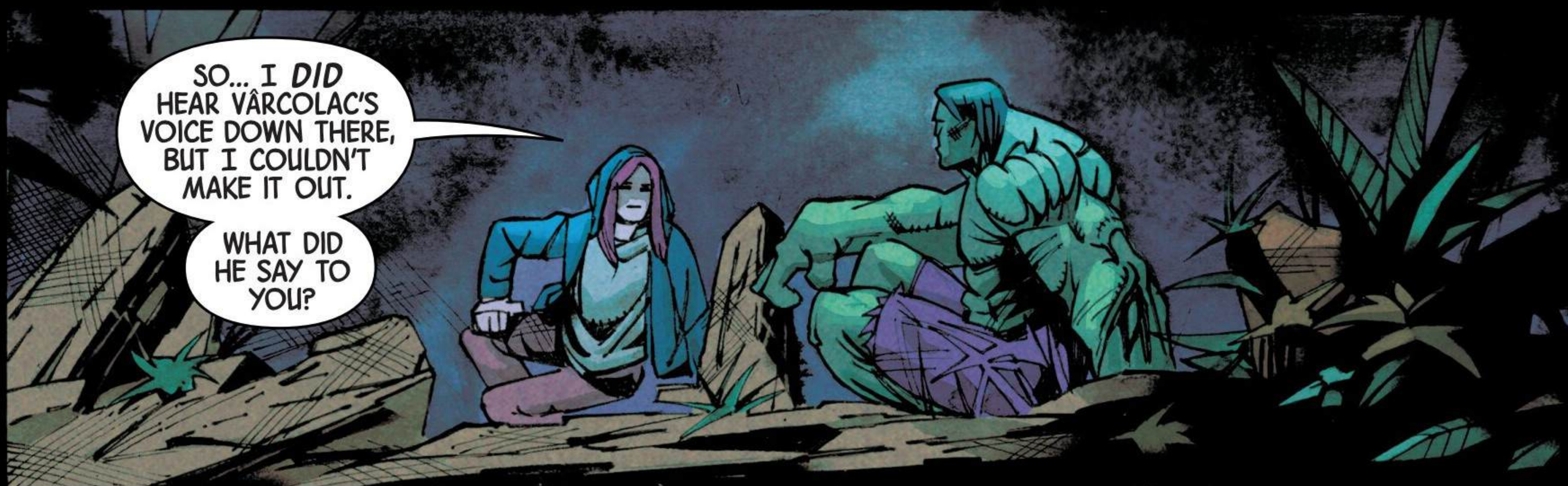
WHADDYA
THINK, WOLF-GUY?
I BET HULK AND ME'RE
THE FIRST ONES EVER TO
SEE THAT PLACE AND
ESCAPE, HUH?





HUH.

CREEPY
SIGN-OFF, BUT
WHATEVER.



SO... I *DID*
HEAR VÂRCOLAC'S
VOICE DOWN THERE,
BUT I COULDN'T
MAKE IT OUT.

WHAT DID
HE SAY TO
YOU?



NOTHING.



DIDN'T SAY
ANYTHING.





♪ THEY ALL SAY THAT
YOU DON'T LOVE ME ♪



♪ THAT I'M JUST
A PIECE OF MEAT
TO YOU ♪



♪ WELL, THAT'S
WHAT YOU ARE TO
ME TOO, BABY ♪



♪ THAT DON'T MEAN
THAT I DON'T
LOVE YOU ♪





♪♪ YOUR
FLESH IS MY
RELIGION ♪♪

→KAFF
KAFF←

GGGG



♪♪ YOUR
FLESH IS MY
RELIGION ♪♪

TUH...
TOMMY

POOOOM



♪♪ YOUR
FLESH IS MY
RELIGION ♪♪

POOOOM

GG
RRRRR



EEEE







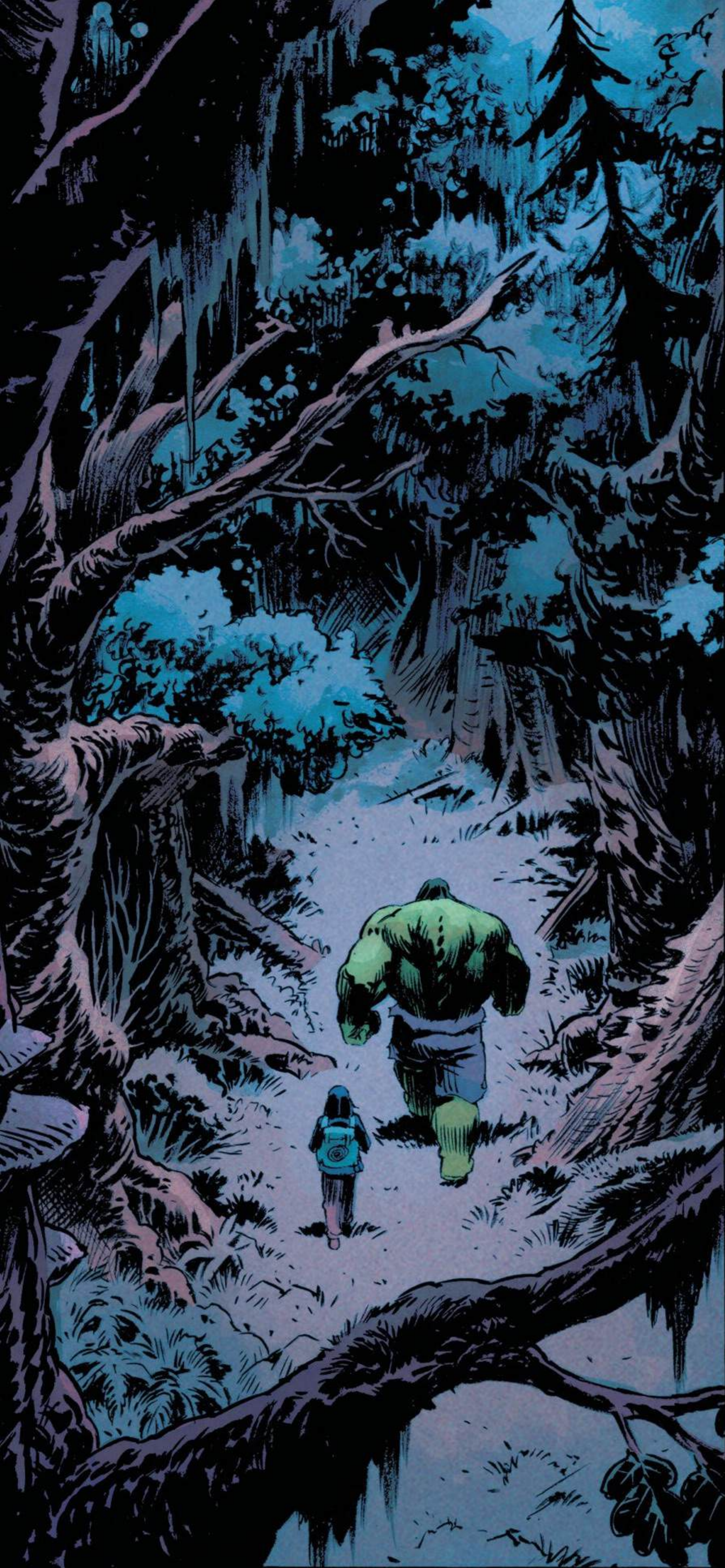
UM...

T-TOILET'S
BUSTED.



...HRNN?

C'MON,
LET'S GET
OUTTA
HERE.





THE HELL WAS *THAT* ABOUT?!

SHUT UP.

POOM
POOM



IT'S **BANNER**, ISN'T IT?

HE'S STILL TRYING TO COME BACK FROM... **WHEREVER** YOU'VE GOT HIM.



WHERE *IS* HE, ANYWAY? JUST... LOCKED UP, INSIDE YOUR BRAIN?

YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT MUCH WHEN HE DID THAT TO--



SHUT UP!



DON'T TALK ABOUT **BANNER**! THERE'S NO **BANNER**!



ONLY **HULK**.

POOM
POOM



"ALL WHO WEAR LYCANA'S SKIN..."

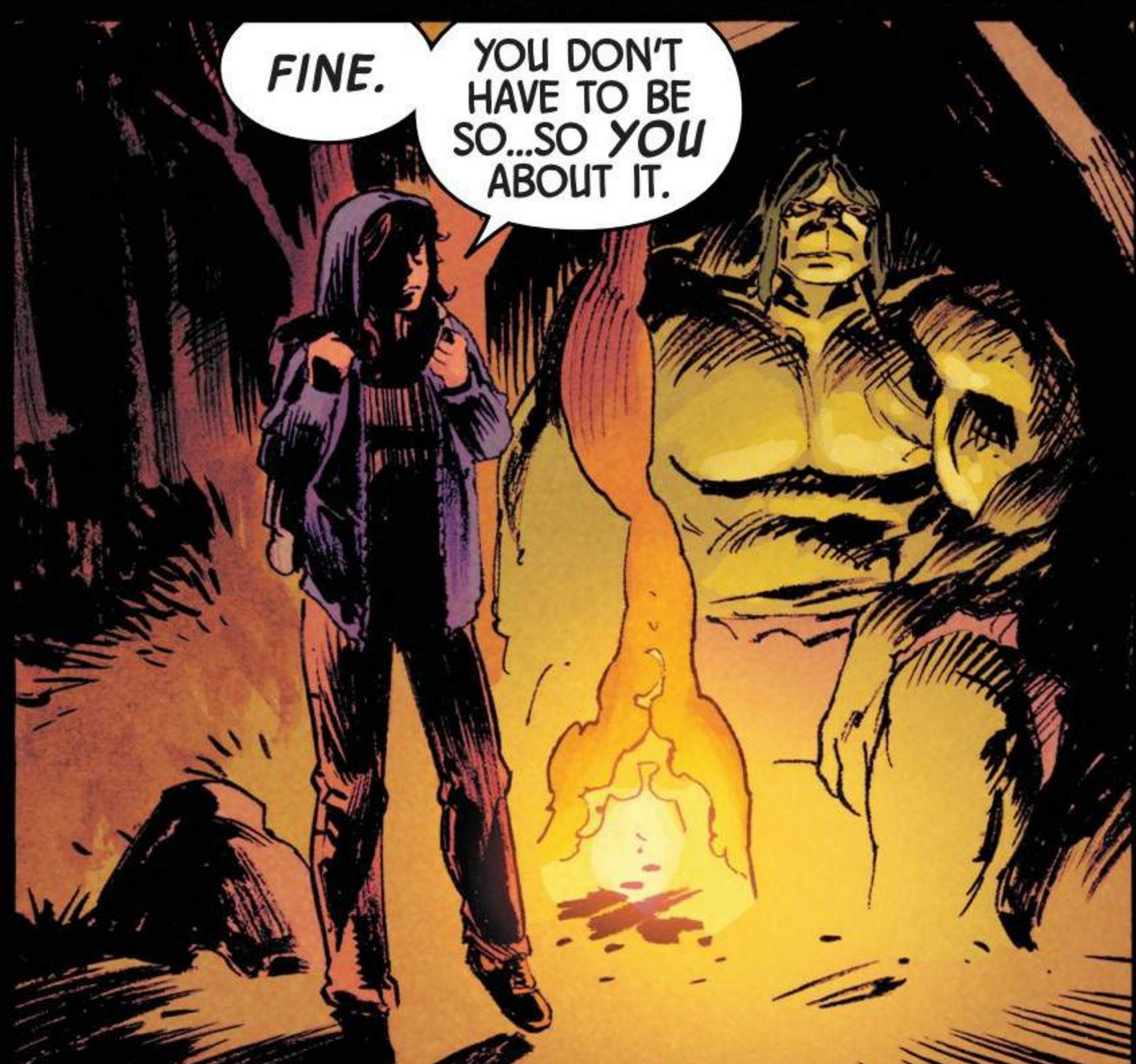


...ARE CONDEMNED TO WRITHE FOREVER IN MY DEN OF THORN AND FLAME.



YOU HUNGRY? I COULD TRY TO FIND--

NO.



FINE.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO...SO YOU ABOUT IT.



FIND YOUR OWN FOOD, JERK-FACE.



FWOOM



WAKWAK



I'M SORRY, CHARLIE.

GRRHH



I WISH
YOU'D NEVER
FOUND US.

...**BANNER?**

BANNER,
HOW AM I
SEEING YOU
RIGHT NOW?
WHERE ARE
YOU?



YOU SEE ME
BECAUSE YOU'RE A
MONSTER NOW,
CHARLIE.

YOU'RE
PART OF A
WORLD TO WHICH
THE NATURAL
WORLD IS
BLIND.



YOU'RE IN
THAT NIGHTMARE
PLACE, AREN'T YOU?
THE **HULKScape**.

ARE YOU...
I DON'T KNOW...
DOES IT **HURT?**



IT DOESN'T
MATTER
ANYMORE.



YOU WERE
RIGHT, BANNER.
I... I THINK I
MESSED UP.

I THINK
I **KILLED**
SOMEBODY.

THIS IS
HOW IT HAPPENS,
CHARLIE. THE
THING INSIDE YOU
IS TAKING
CONTROL.

WE HAVE TO
GET LYCANA OUT
OF YOU...MAKE YOU
HUMAN AGAIN.



"HUMAN."

MAKE ME
WEAK AND
PATHETIC
AGAIN, YOU
MEAN?



I'M
STRONG
NOW. I WANT
TO CONTROL IT,
NOT GIVE IT
UP.

IT
DOESN'T
WORK LIKE
THAT.



%#\$& YOU,
BANNER. I'M NOT
GOING BACK.

CHARLIE.
WAIT.



GO TO
NEW YORK CITY. FIND
DOCTOR STRANGE.
MAYBE HE CAN TEACH YOU
HOW TO CONTROL
LYCANA.

NEW YORK?
HULK WOULD
NEVER--

DON'T TELL
HULK. LEAD HIM
TO NEW YORK ON
SOME PRETENSE.



LYCANA HAS
KILLED PEOPLE NOW,
CHARLIE. IF YOU DON'T
GET CONTROL OF HER,
SHE'LL KILL YOU,
TOO.

GO
TO NEW
YORK...

"...AND FIND
DOCTOR
STRANGE."

THE NEXT DAY.



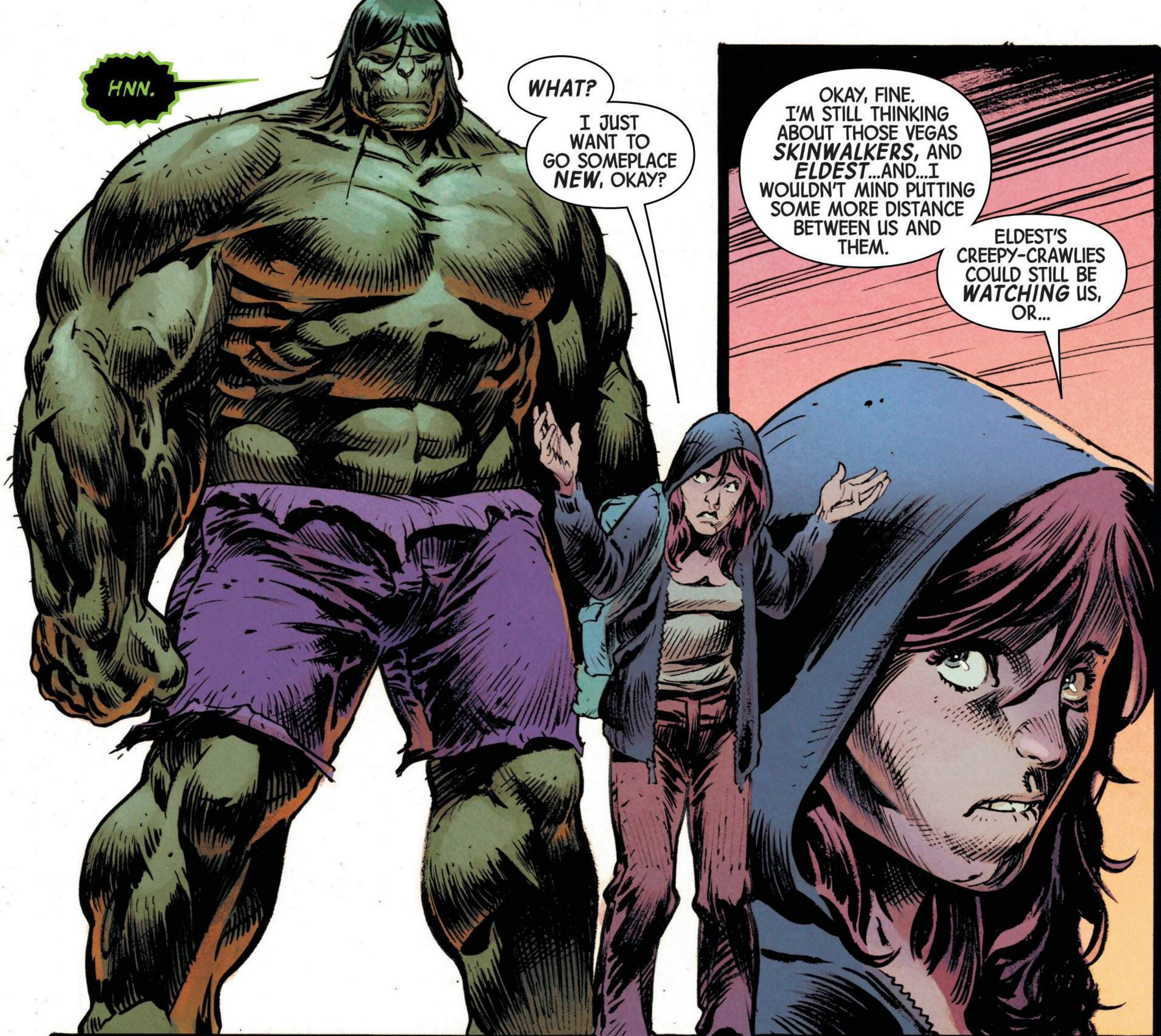
HEY.
UM...

I HEARD
THERE'S
MOUNTAINS
IN NEW YORK
STATE.

HRRN?

YEAH. I
HEARD IT'S **NICE**
UP THERE. RIVERS,
MOUNTAINS, TREES,
EASY FISHING...AND
**NO PEOPLE AT
ALL** IN SOME
PLACES.

WE
WOULDN'T HAVE
TO...GO INTO THE
CITY OR ANYTHING.



HNN.

WHAT?

I JUST
WANT TO
GO SOMEPLACE
NEW, OKAY?

OKAY, FINE.
I'M STILL THINKING
ABOUT THOSE VEGAS
SKINWALKERS, AND
ELDEST...AND...I
WOULDN'T MIND PUTTING
SOME MORE DISTANCE
BETWEEN US AND
THEM.

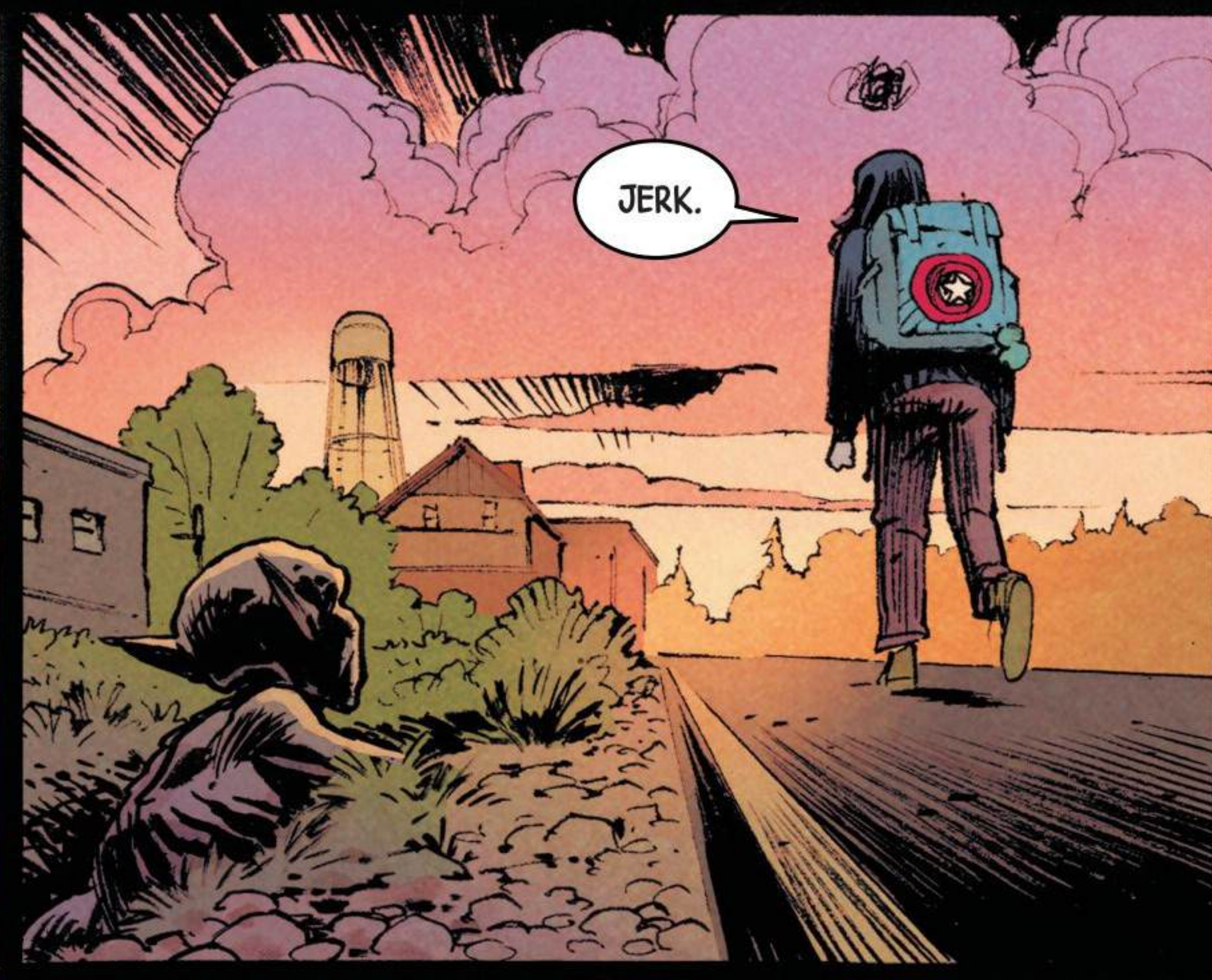
ELDEST'S
CREEPY-CRAWLIES
COULD STILL BE
WATCHING US,
OR...



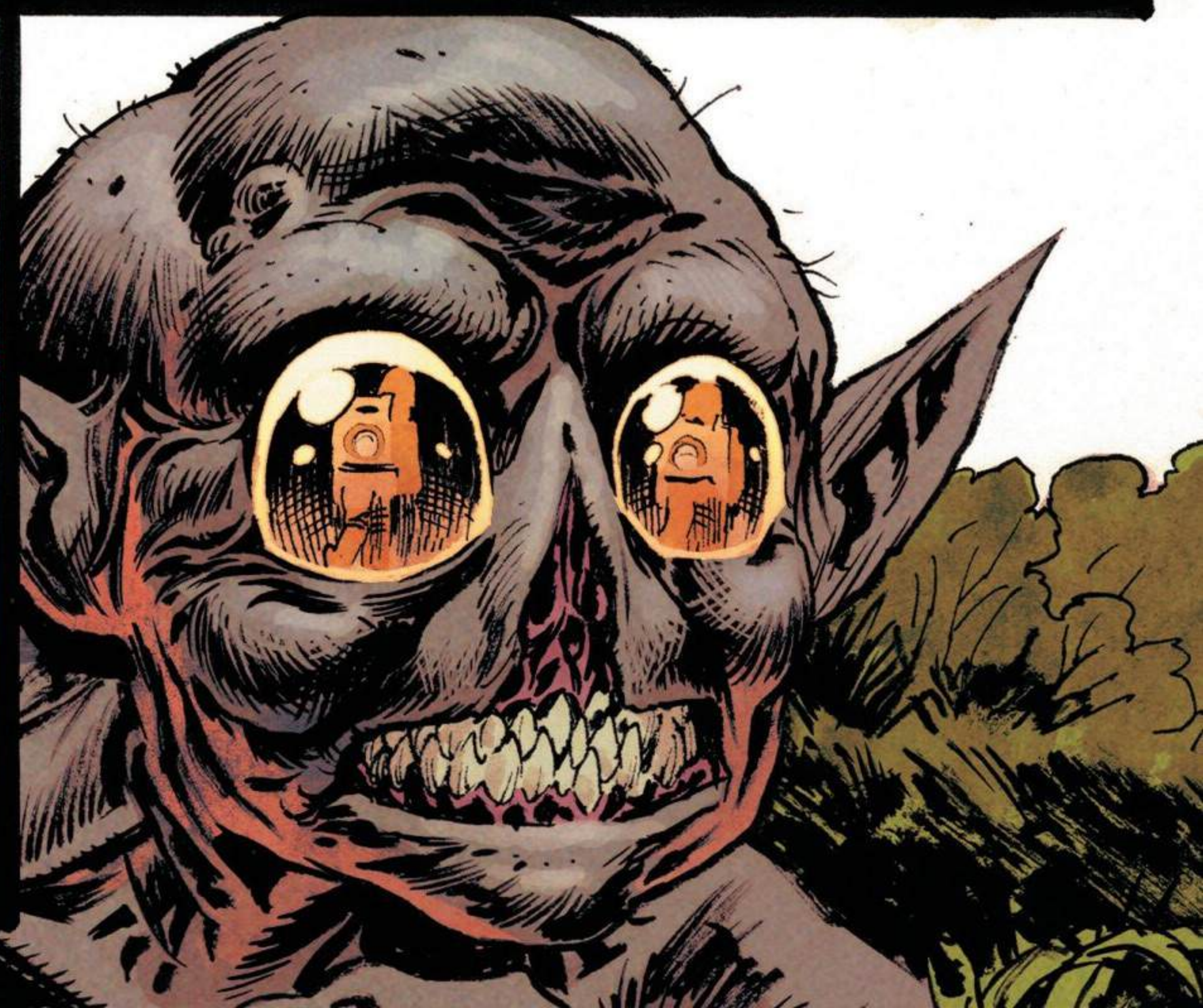
POOM
POOM
POOM

OKAY
COOL, WE'LL
JUST GO
WHEREVER YOU
WANT AND I
CAN'T SAY
#%\$&, HUH?

GREAT!



JERK.





FWHOOOOOSH!

NO WAY JORNA WOULD SURVIVE THAT.

OH MAN, IN YOUR DREAMS.



WHATEVER, YOU KNOW I'M RIGHT.

WHAT I KNOW IS THAT YOUR GUARD IS DOWN, WHAAAAAAT?! EAT A DRAGON STRIKE!!!

YOU GUYS ARE APEX DORKS.



THAT'S RIGHT. ONLY AN APEX DORK COULD PERFORM A FLAWLESS DRAGON STRIKE WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A DRAGON STONE.

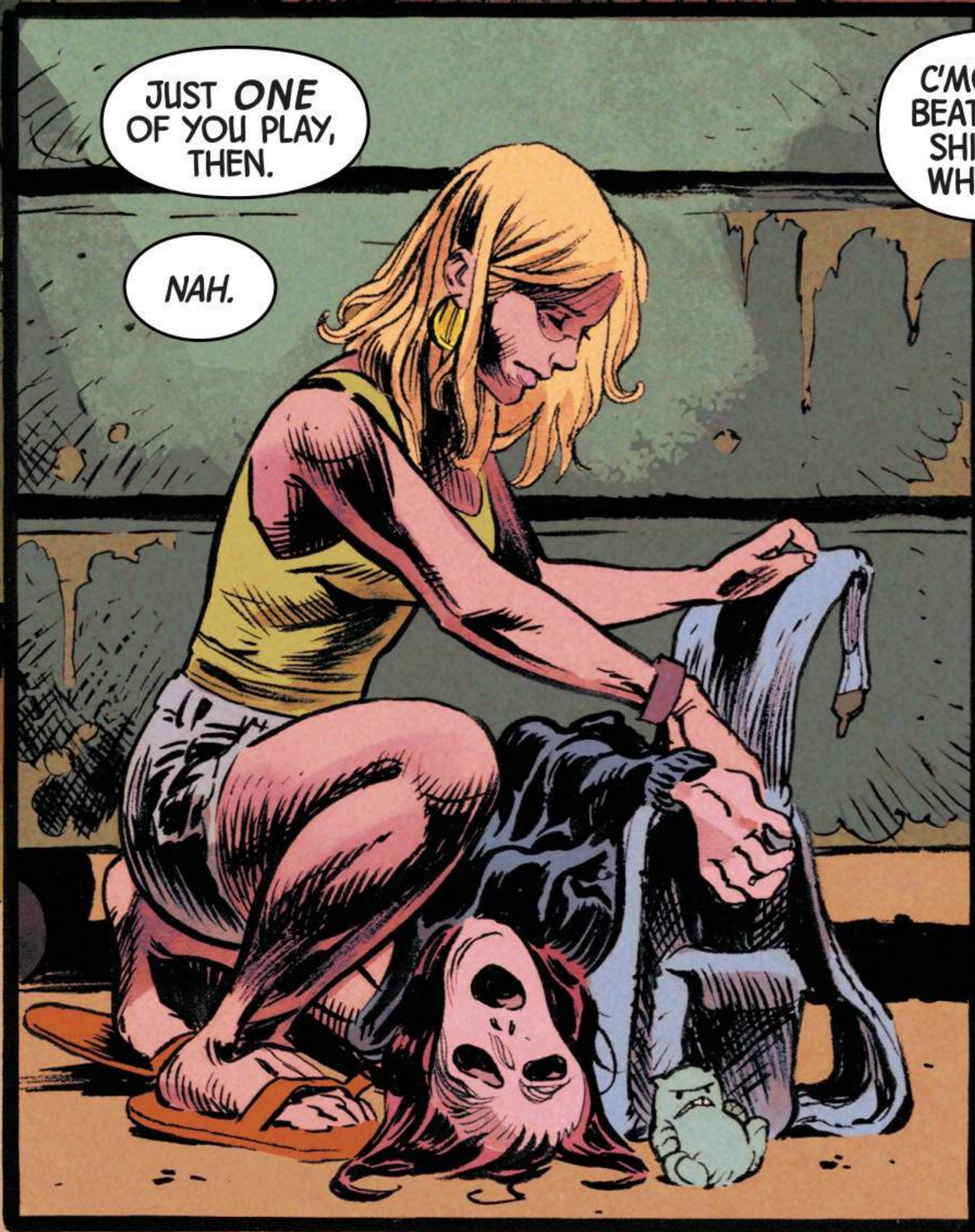
I'LL BE CAREFUL. DORK.



PUT AWAY YOUR GIANT ANIME SWORDS AND LET'S PLAY SOME BALL.

MISTER PAT'S NOT HERE YET! WE CAN'T PLAY WITH THREE.





JUST ONE
OF YOU PLAY,
THEN.

NAH.

C'MON, I'LL
BEAT YOU IN
SHIFTS OR
WHATEVER.



FINE,
LET'S--

HEY.



ROOM
FOR ONE
MORE?

YEAH,
ACTUALLY. WANT
TO PLAY?

SURE,
I'LL PLAY.

I GOT
NEW GIRL!



I WANT
NEW GIRL!

TOUGH, I
CALLED IT!



WHAT'S
YOUR NAME,
NEW GIRL?



AM I NOT
AS PRETTY AS
BEFORE?





INCREDIBLE HULK #20 STORMBREAKERS VARIANT BY
MARTÍN CÓCCOLO & JESUS ABURTOV



INCREDIBLE HULK #20
WINTER HOLIDAY VARIANT BY
GREG LAND & PAUL MOUNTS

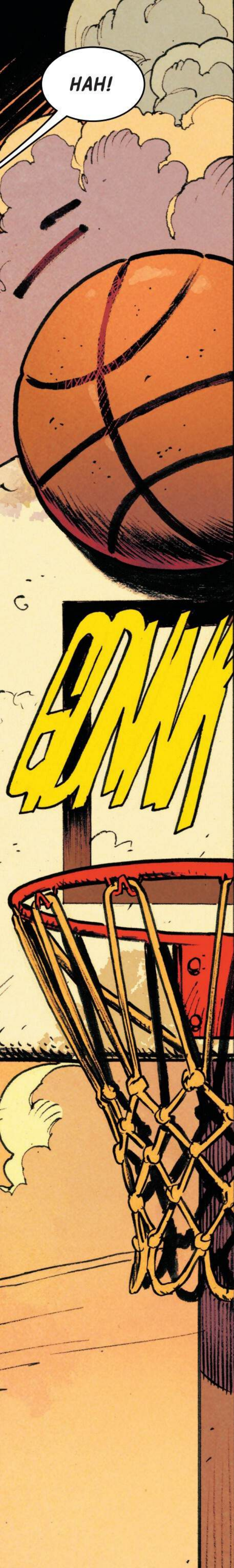


INCREDIBLE HULK #21
FANTASTIC FOUR HOMAGE VARIANT BY
TODD NAUCK & RACHELLE ROSENBERG



INCREDIBLE HULK #21 ICONIC VARIANT BY
TODD NAUCK & RACHELLE ROSENBERG





HAH!



BA-DERRRP,
BA-DERRRP! I
WANNA SHOOT, I
WANNA SHOOT!

JOSH, WILL
YOU *STOP*?
YOU'RE BEING A
TOTAL DOOF.

YEAH, SHUT
UP OR YOU
CAN'T PLAY WITH
US ANYMORE.

NO NAME-
CALLING, GUYS.
HE'S A *LITTLE*
BROTHER--IT'S
PART OF THE
DEAL.

WORRY
LESS ABOUT
JOSH...



...AND MORE ABOUT
MY JUMP SHOT,
HA HAAAA!



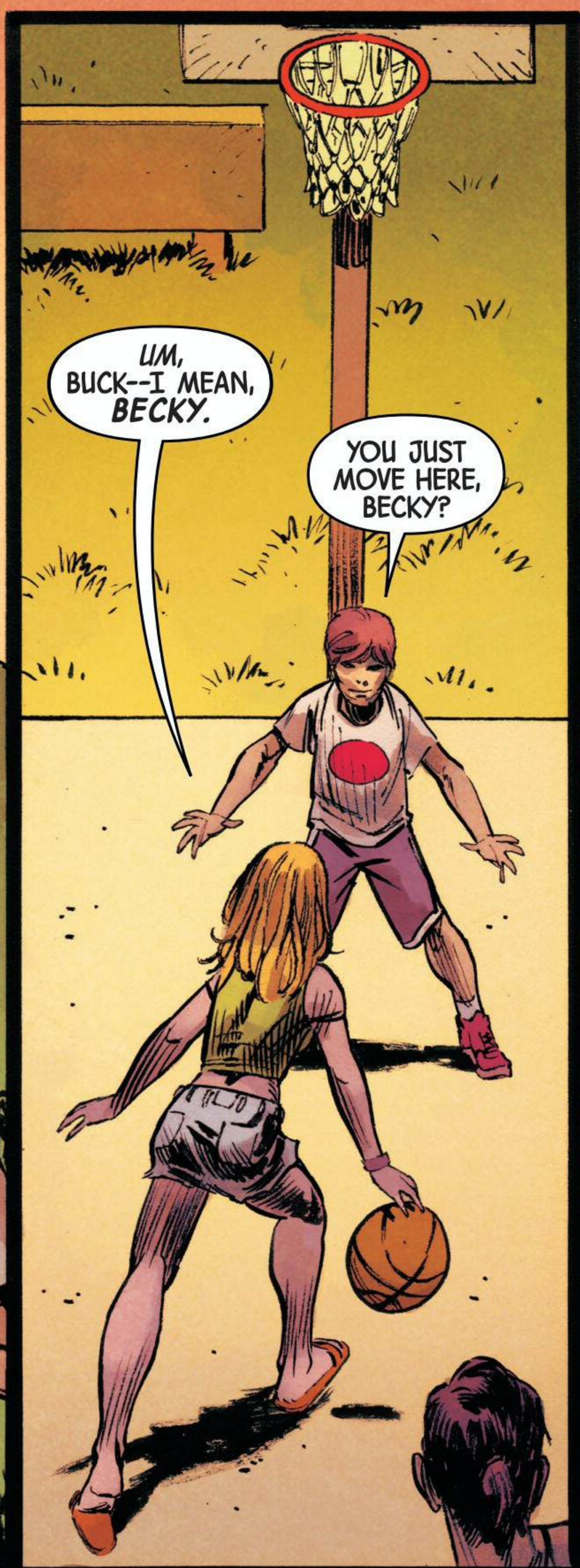
MISS.



BAM!
MINE.

GOOD
REBOUND,
NEW GIRL!

HEY,
WHAT'S
YOUR NAME
AGAIN?



UM,
BUCK--I MEAN,
BECKY.

YOU JUST
MOVE HERE,
BECKY?



NAH.
JUST FELT
LIKE HANGING
OUT.



"FRIEND
HULK!"

NEARBY.

I RETURN!
IT PLEASES
ME TO SEE
YOU.

THE
HELL ARE
YOU?

EH? CAN
YOU NOT SEE
ME? I AM
CHARLIE, YOUR
COMPANION!

STRONG,
LIKE YOU!
YES?

AM I NOT
AS PRETTY AS
BEFORE?

ARE YOU...
WEARING...

...HER
SKIN?!



N-NO...
STOP! I AM
CHARLIE, YOUR
FRIEND!

REMEMBER
WHEN WE FELLED
GREAT UDRU TOGETHER?
AND THE MIGHTY
WAR DEVIL?

SHUT
UP!!!



DID
YOU KILL
HER?!

N-NO! NORGL
IS JUST A POOR
RUTLING OF THE WOOD!
THE TREES ARE SILENT,
MY FOLK ARE GONE...
THERE IS ONLY
NORGL!

THE OLD
LAWS SAY ANY
SKIN CLAIMED
BELONGS TO THEM
WHO CLAIMS IT...
A-AND I...

PLEASE!
SQUEAKE
MERCY!

DID
YOU?!

WHORP

...I THOUGHT
TO BE YOUR
FRIEND, THAT'S
ALL NORGL
WANTED!





TAKE OFF
THE SKIN.
NOW.

TAKE IT...
OFF?

B-BUT,
FRIEND HULK...
THE GIRL LEFT
HER SKIN
UNGUARDED.

THE OLD
LAWS CALL IT
MINE.

UHHRRR!!!



OFF!!!

WHY DO
YOU ATTACK?
AM I NOT LIKE
YOU NOW?

BOOM

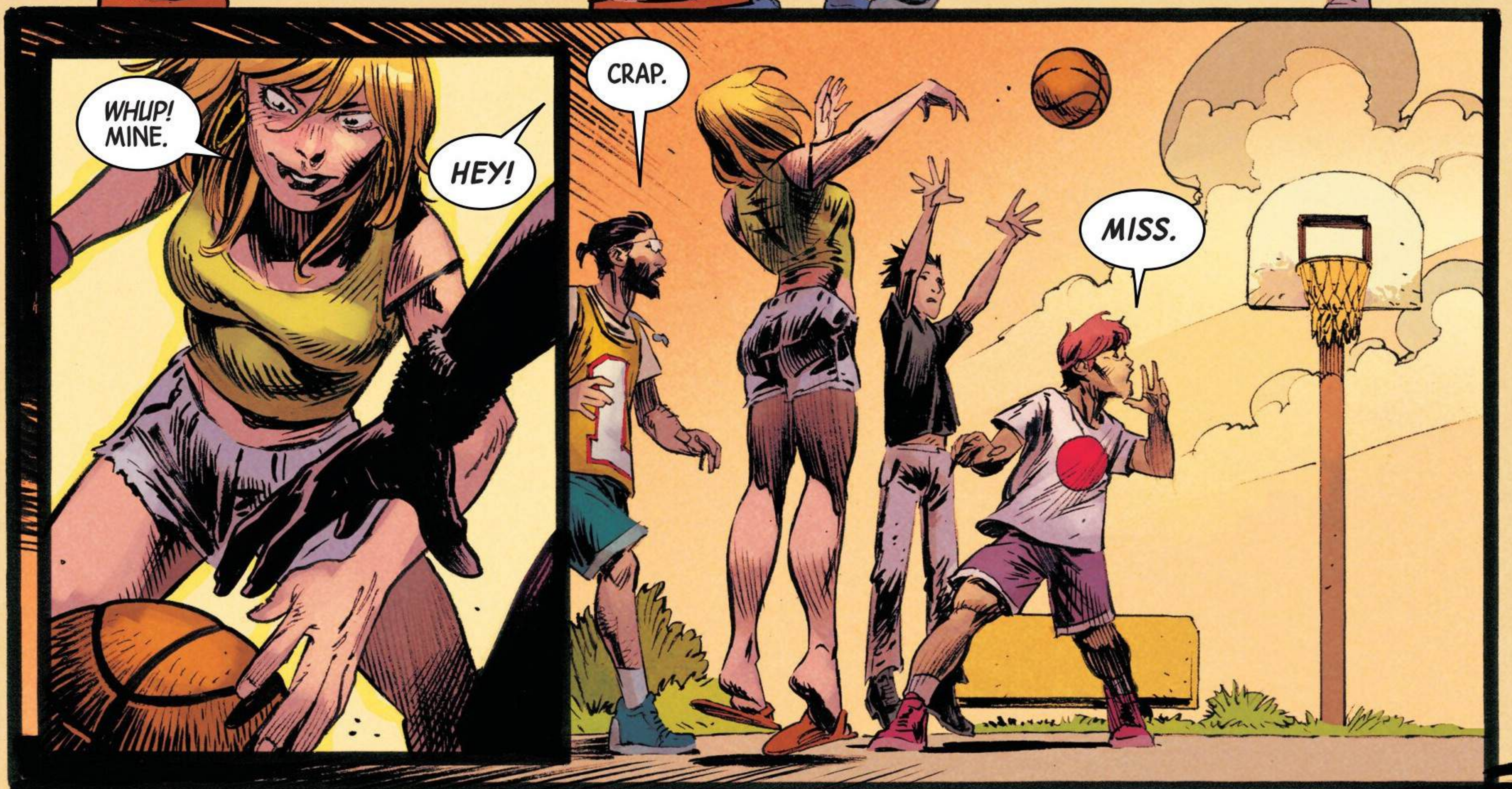


IT IS
WELL.

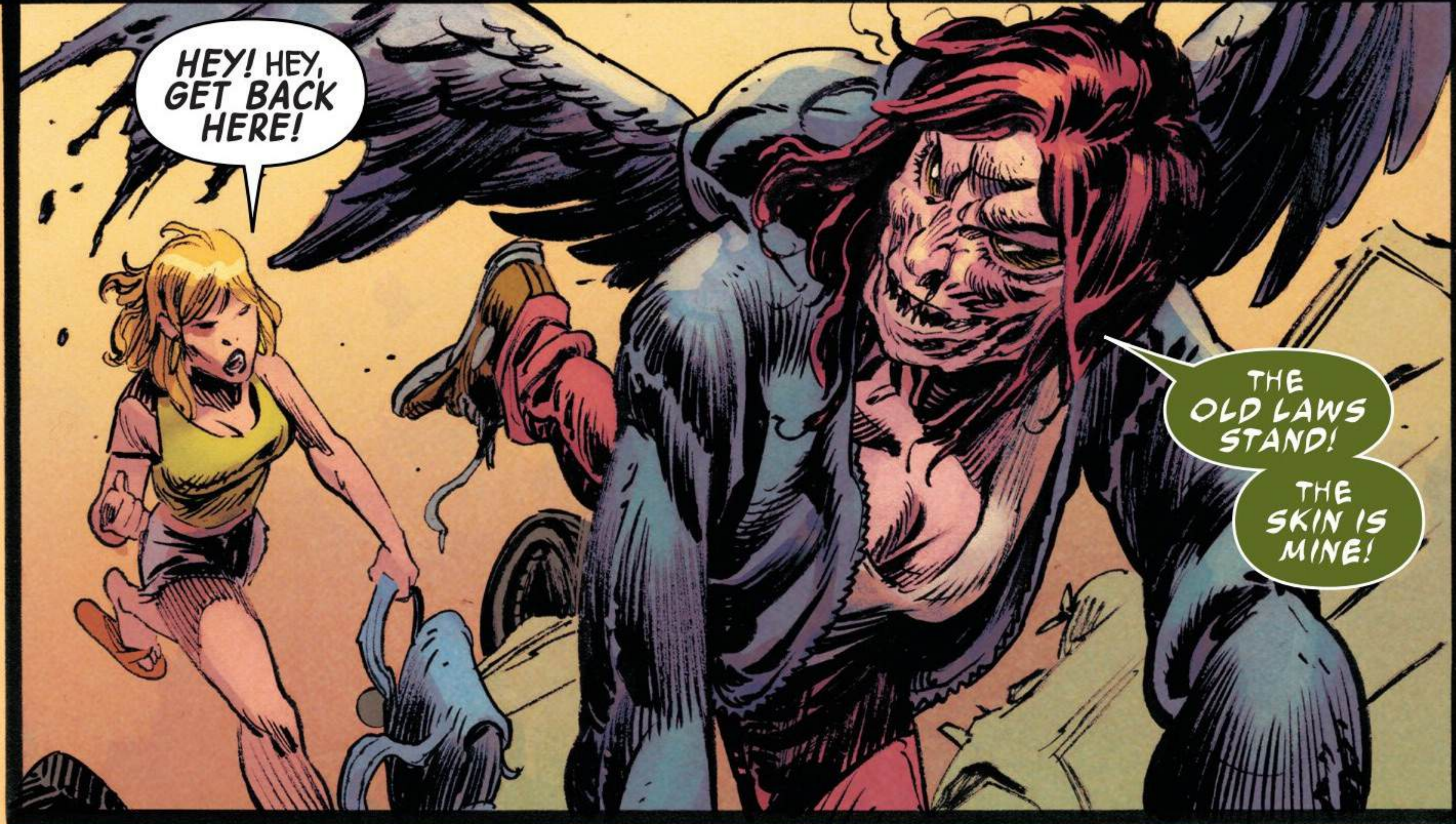
IF YOU
WILL NOT
BE NORGUL'S
FRIEND...



...NORGUL
WILL FIND
FRIENDS
AMONG
MEN.







"...THERE'S SOMETHING
REALLY WRONG
WITH HER!"

HEY!
GIVE IT
BACK!

YOU LEFT
IT BEHIND!
UNGUARDED,
AND IN THE
LIGHT!

IT IS MINE
FOREVER!

GONNA
WISH YOU
HADN'T MESSED
WITH ME, YOU
LITTLE...

OH.

OH, NO.

LOST
YOUR GIFT,
YES?

LITTLE
NORGUL
BEARS THE
GODSKIN
NOW!

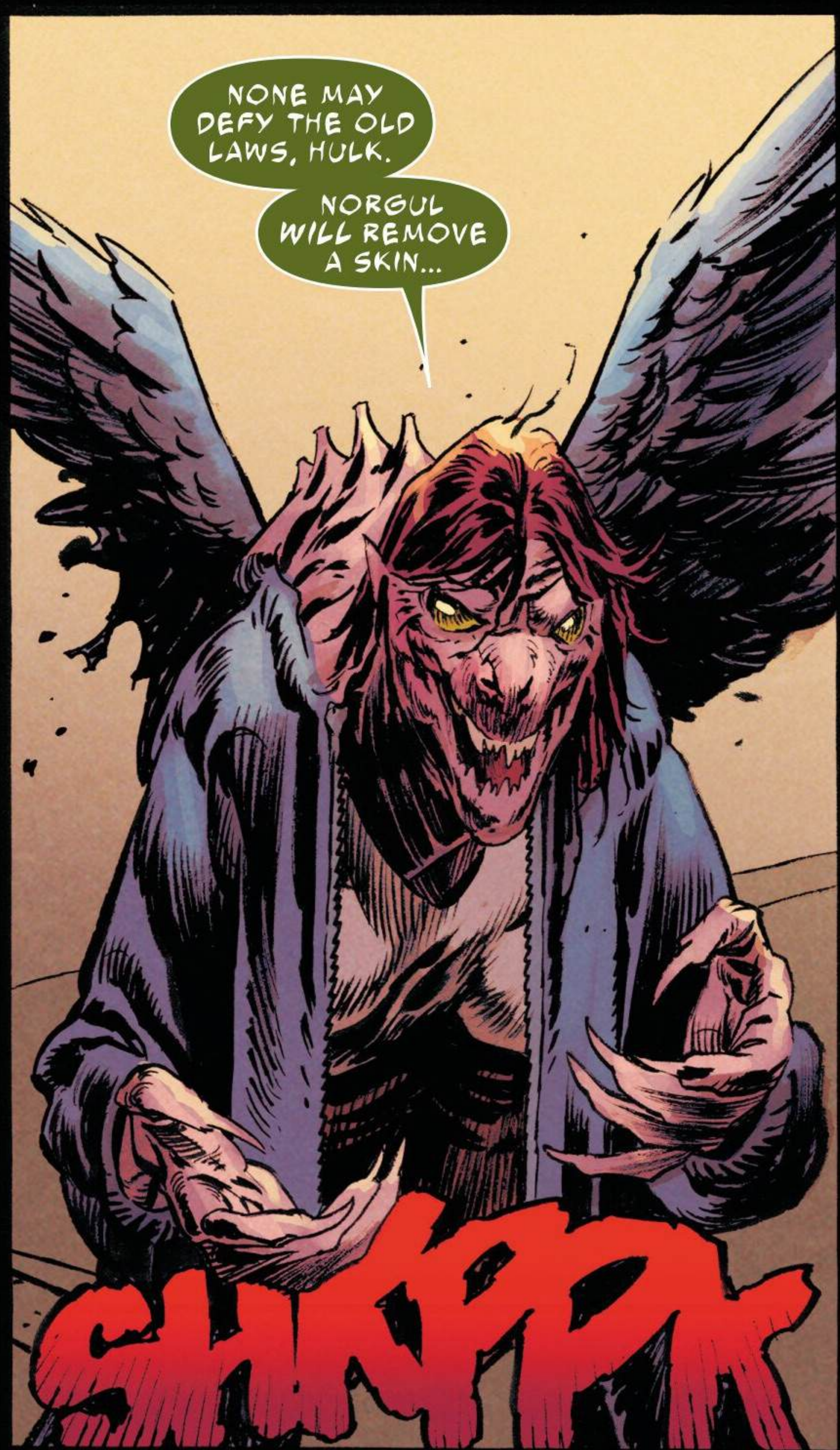
FINALLY,
NORGUL IS
STRONG!
STRONG
AND--

EEP





TAKE
OFF THE
SKIN.



NONE MAY
DEFY THE OLD
LAWS, HULK.

NORGUL
WILL REMOVE
A SKIN...

SHKPPK



...BUT
NOT HIS
OWN.



THUMP





STOP!

N-NORGUL
SHOULD HAVE
BEEN YOUR FRIEND!
CAN BE, STILL!

YOU ARE
NOT THE ONLY
ONES STRONG!



NORGUL
HEARS ELDEST'S
CALL! SH-SHE
SCHEMES YET!
NORGUL CAN
HELP YOU!



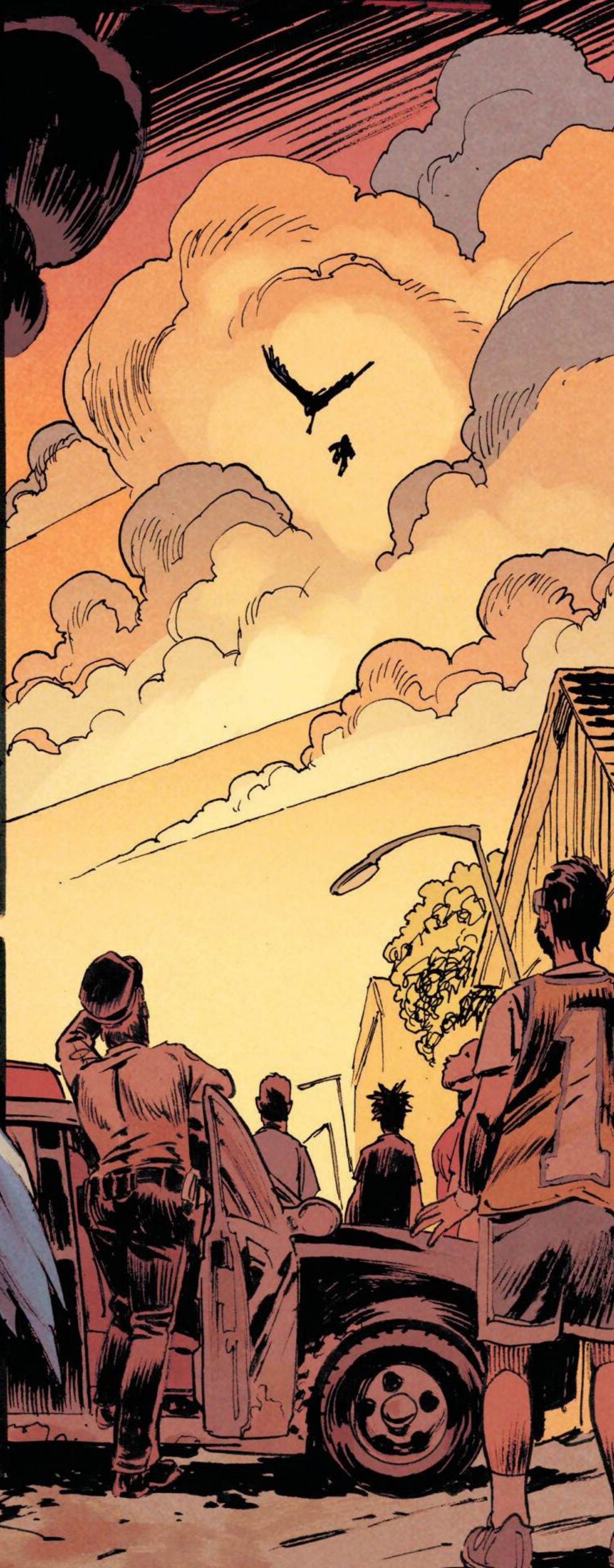
KID.
LEAVE HIM.

HE'S
HARMLESS.
PUNY.

Y-YES!
YOU SEEK
THE SORCERER,
YES? HE WHO
WEARS THE EYE,
IN THE GREAT
CITY TO THE
EAST?

NORGUL
WILL
HELP--

NORGUL
KNOWS THE OLD
LAWS...THINGS YOU
MUST KNOW TO
SURVIVE! NORGUL
CAN TEACH
YOU!



THAT EVENING.

YOU'VE BEEN
HULKIER THAN
NORMAL.

WHAT'S
UP?

HE WAS
PUNY.

HARMLESS.

LOOK,
I... I KNOW.
I DIDN'T MEAN
TO...

IT'S BEEN GETTING HARDER
TO CONTROL. SOMETIMES
I WAKE UP, AND...STUFF'S
HAPPENED OVERNIGHT.
BAD STUFF.

DOCTOR
STRANGE STILL LIVES
IN NEW YORK, RIGHT? HE
WAS AN AVENGER, TOO...
YOU GUYS ARE
PROBABLY BUDDIES?

BANNER SAID
STRANGE KNOWS
ABOUT THIS KIND
OF STUFF.

I THOUGHT I
MIGHT ASK HIM
FOR--

BANNER
SAID?

I... I MEAN
YEAH, BUT HE
DIDN'T... C'MON,
HULK, BANNER AND
ME AREN'T FRIENDS!
NOT LIKE YOU AND
ME! IT'S NOT
LIKE--

WARNED
YOU ABOUT
BANNER.

LEAVE
M--

LEAVE ME
ALO--

BANNER'S...
YOUR FRIEND...

BANNER
WANTS...TALK TO
STRANGE...

GO WITH
BANNER.

AND
LEAVE ME
ALONE!

SPLASH



HULK?

BANNER?



...CHARLIE?

ARE...
ARE YOU
REAL?



IS HE
GONE?

CHICAGO.
THAT NIGHT.



CRUSHER
CREEL.



WHO'S
THERE?

YOU KNOW
MY VOICE WELL
ENOUGH. 'LESS YOU
KNOW NOT YOUR
OWN DREAMS.





Y-YOU'RE...
HER.
THE THING
THAT'S LOOKIN'
FOR HULK.

THE
BOTHER OF
THE FRACTURED
SON OUTWEIGHS
HIS VALUE.



THE ONE
BELOW ALL'S
GREEN FLAME
DWELLS IN
OTHERS,
ALSO...



...AND
IT WILL
SERVE JUST
AS WELL.

AGH...!

STOP!
PLEASE!



I'LL HELP
YOU! I--I'LL DO
WHATEVER YOU
WANT!

YES,
"ABSORBING
MAN."



YOU
WILL.



INCREDIBLE HULK #21 VARIANT BY MARTIN SIMMONDS



NEW YORK CITY. MANHATTAN.
THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

WHAT'S
UP WITH THAT
WINDOW? I ALWAYS
WONDERED.

STRANGE
TOLD ME ONCE. HE
SAID IT'S A SEAL THAT
KEEPS OUT...SUPERNATURAL
THREATS, OR
SOMETHING.

HUH.

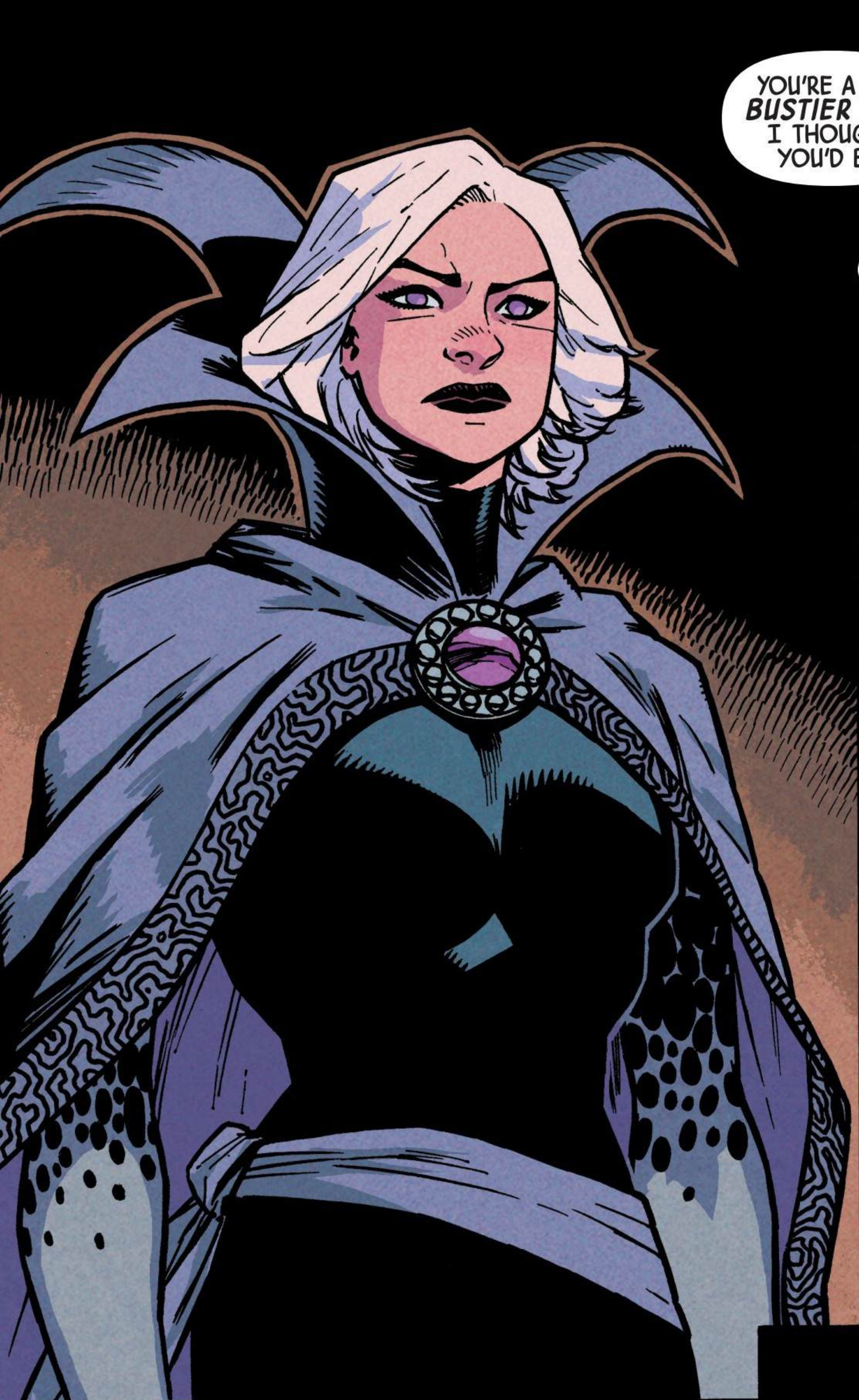
YOU
THINK THAT
INCLUDES
US?

DOESN'T
MATTER.

WE'RE
NOT ENTERING
THROUGH THE
WIN--

UH...
DAMN.

DOCTOR
STRANGE?



YOU'RE A LOT
BUSTIER THAN
I THOUGHT
YOU'D BE.

CHARLIE.



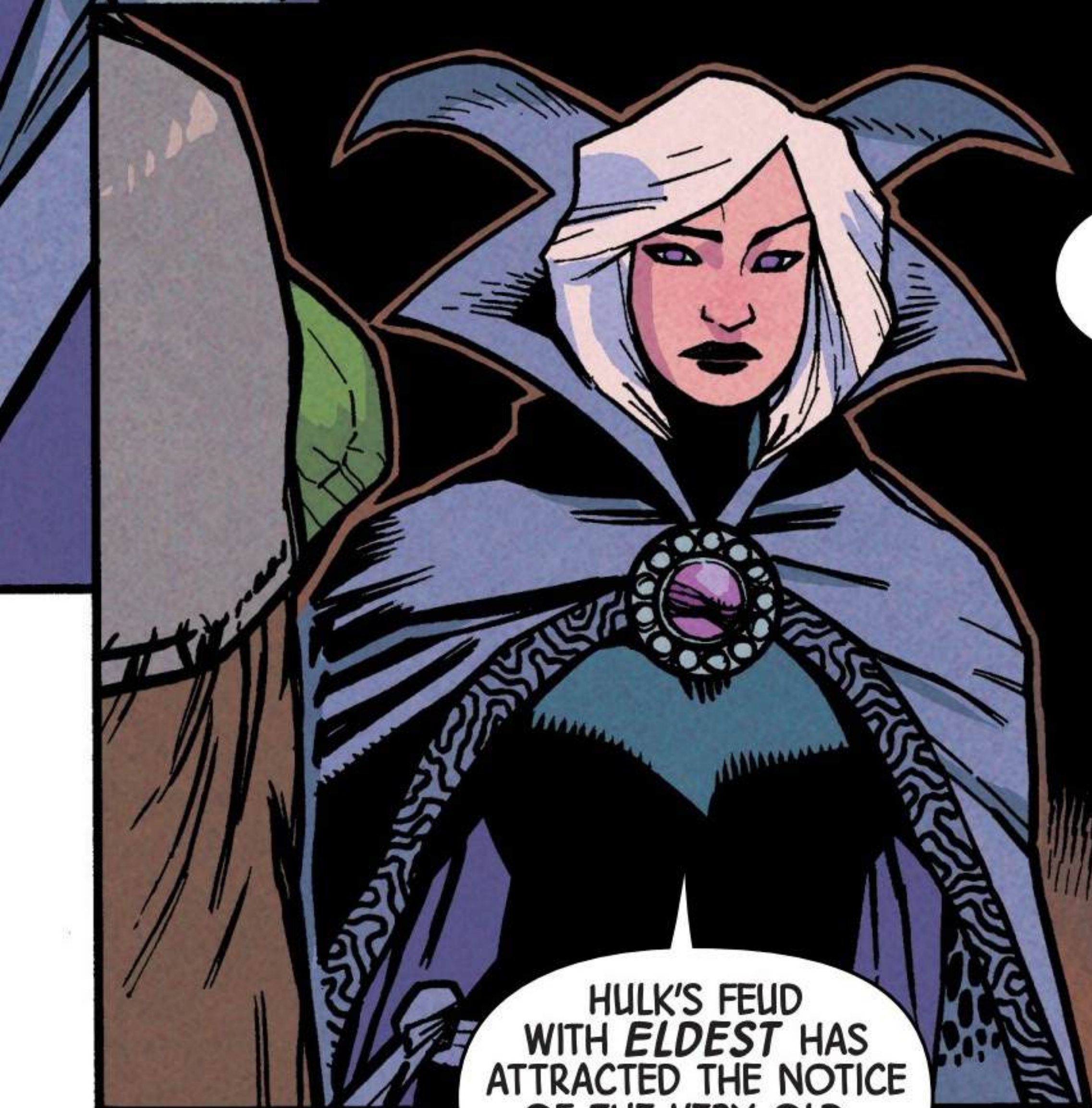
SORRY.

CLEA, I
DON'T KNOW IF
YOU REMEMBER ME.
I'M DOCTOR
BRUCE--

I REMEMBER
YOU, DOCTOR
BANNER. OR RATHER,
YOUR **OTHER**
SELF.*

I KNOW,
TOO, WHY YOU
HAVE COME.

*WAY BACK IN DEFENDERS #71, 1979! --JDW



YOU
DO?

HULK'S FEUD
WITH **ELDEST** HAS
ATTRACTED THE NOTICE
OF THE VERY OLD...
AND THE VERY
POWERFUL.

I HAVE
HEARD **MUCH** OF
YOU OF LATE. AND OF
THE YOUNG SKINWALKER,
CHARLENE TIDWELL.



YOU SURELY
COME TO ASK
DOCTOR STRANGE
TO FREE YOU FROM
LYCANA'S GODSKIN...
TO MAKE YOU
HUMAN AGAIN.

BUT
THERE IS
LITTLE ANYONE
CAN--

WHAT?
NO.



THAT'S WHAT **BANNER** WANTS ME TO DO. I DON'T WANT TO BE A WEAK LITTLE NORMIE AGAIN.

I'M **STRONG** NOW. I'M **NEVER** GIVING THAT UP, NOT FOR NOTHIN'.



LYCANA'S GODSKIN GIVES **GREAT POWER**, GIRL. BUT IN THE END, SHE DEVOURS PREY, SERVANT AND VESSEL ALIKE.

LYCANA'S CHILDREN, TOO, WILL **NEVER** STOP HUNTING YOU.



YEAH, IT TAKES CONTROL SOMETIMES. MAKES ME DO...BAD THINGS.

CAN'T YOU JUST...I DON'T KNOW...HELP ME **CONTROL** IT?



HM.

HOW **ALIKE** THE TWO OF YOU ARE.



COME IN, THEN.

LET US SEE WHAT MAY BE DONE.

HOLY CRAP.

TOUCH **NOTHING** WITHOUT LEAVE. THERE ARE DEVICES HERE THAT WOULD **UNMAKE** YOU, GIVEN THE CHANCE.

WHERE'S DOCTOR STRANGE?

STEPHEN'S WORK HAS TAKEN HIM FAR, *FAR* AWAY AT PRESENT.* HE CANNOT HELP YOU.

BUT *I* MAY BE OF USE TO THE GIRL.

*TO SEE WHERE DOCTOR STRANGE'S WORK HAS TAKEN HIM, READ DOCTOR STRANGE OF ASGARD! --JDW

THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM IS HOST TO **MANY** OCCULT ENERGIES, CHILD.

ENERGIES SOMETIMES... COLLIDE.

DANG. WHAT HAPPENED **HERE?**

FOLLOW ME INTO THE LOWER LEVELS.

LET US SEE WHO HAS THE GREATER HOLD OVER YOUR FLESH, YOU OR THE BEAST LYCANA.



...?

IS...THIS
SOMETHING
I SHOULD BE
CONCERNED
ABOUT?



YOU MAY
NOT COME WITH
US, DOCTOR BANNER.
THE THREAT YOU
POSE IS FAR TOO
GREAT.

STEPHEN
SUSPECTED YOUR
PATH MAY LEAD YOU
TO THE SANCTUM, AND
HE PREPARED A ROOM
FOR YOU...



...ONE HE
CALLS THE
DRAWING
ROOM.

INSIDE, THE
HULK WILL HAVE
NO POWER TO
EMERGE.

NO ONE
HAS THE POWER
TO KEEP OUT
THE HULK.

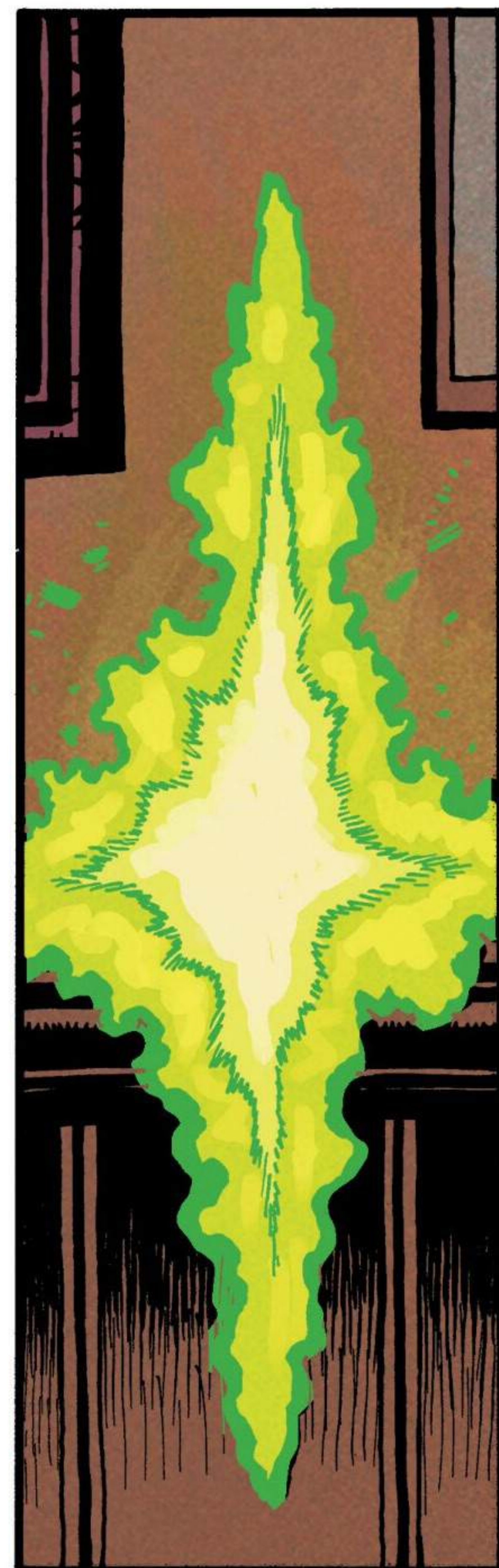
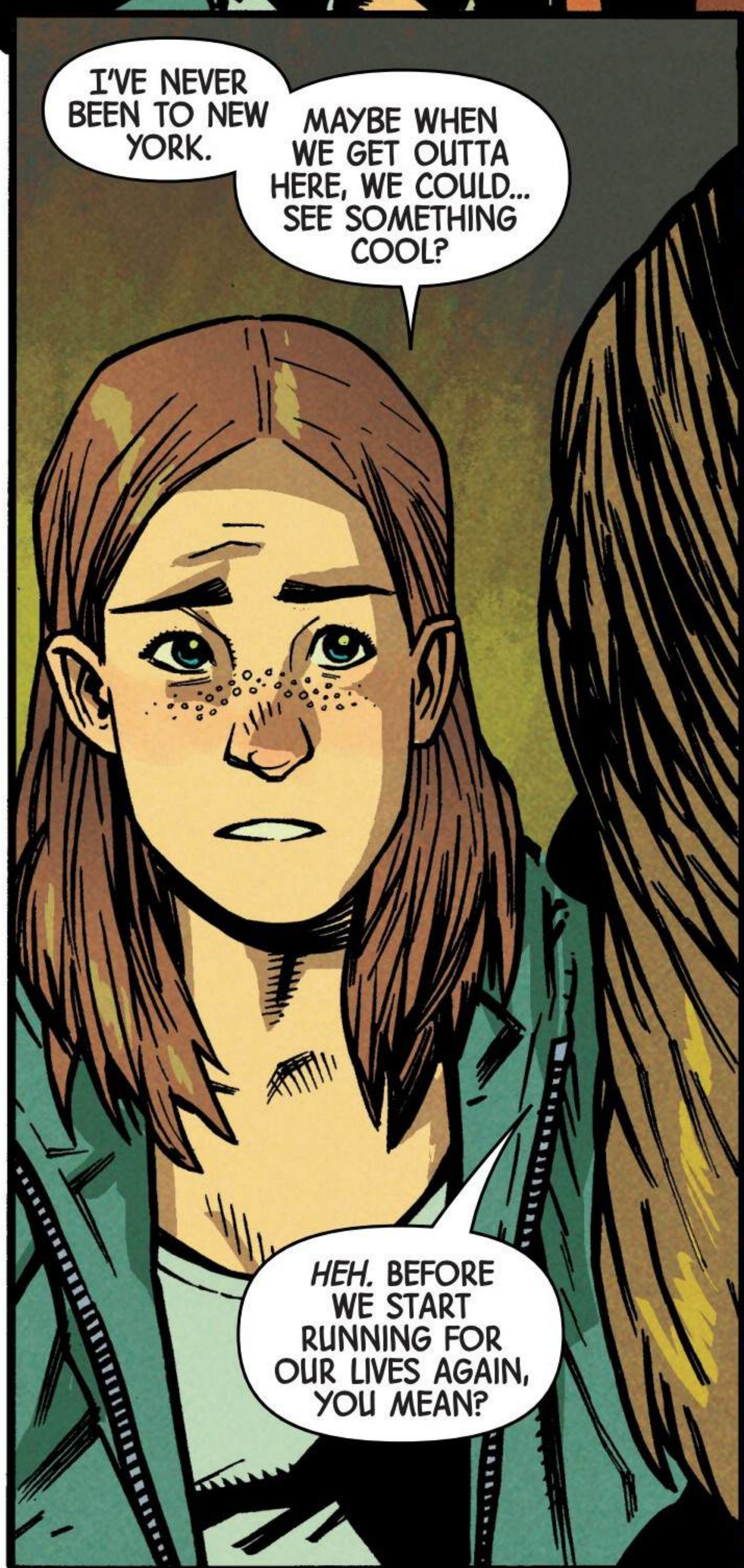
THE DRAWING
ROOM EXISTS IN
ITS OWN PLANE OF
EXISTENCE. ONE IN
WHICH "GAMMA"
HAS LITTLE
MEANING.

I ASSURE
YOU, YOU WILL
BE QUITE SAFE INSIDE.
AND IT WILL KEEP US
SAFE FROM YOU,
AS WELL.



YOU WANT
THE GIRL KEPT
SAFE FROM HER FELLOW
SKINWALKERS, AND
FROM HERSELF? THIS
IS ALL I ASK.

PLEASE ENTER
THE DRAWING
ROOM, DOCTOR
BANNER.





AH.

"DRAWING ROOM."



CLEVER,
STEPHEN.

ALL RIGHT,
HULK. LET'S GET
COMFORTABLE.

IF CLEA'S
RIGHT ABOUT
GAMMA NOT BEING
APPLICABLE HERE, I'LL
HAVE TO ASK HER
HOW TO...



...HOW...

CLEA?



CHARLIE!

RUN!!!

IT'S A TRAP!!!



SHE CAN'T
HEAR YOU,
MEATSACK.

TIME TO
PAY FOR WHAT
YOU AND THE GIRL
DONE TO LYCANA...
AND TO US.



H-HULK.

HULK,
HELP.



NOT AS
SMART AS
PEOPLE SAY,
ARE YOU?

WE TOLD
YOU...

...THERE
IS NO HULK
HERE.

SHRRRIII

P
P



YOU AND DOCTOR STRANGE ACTUALLY *LIVE* IN THIS HOUSE?

THIS ISN'T JUST YOUR... CREEPY MAGIC STUDIO?

THERE ARE LIVING QUARTERS HERE, THOUGH NONE THIS FAR BELOW.



WHEN WE WERE TALKING, YOU SOUNDED LIKE YOU KNEW ABOUT LYCANA ALREADY.

I DO INDEED.

SO WHAT'S THE PLAN? ARE WE GONNA DO A *TRAINING MONTAGE* OR SOMETHING?

I SUPPOSE THAT *IS* WHAT CLEA MIGHT HAVE DONE, YES?

"CLEA WOULD HAVE"...?

HA... HAHA. I GUESS I'M CONFUSED.



ISN'T CLEA *YOUR* N--

TOO MANY.

YOU SHOULD BE *HONORED*, YOU KNOW.

IT TOOK A GREAT MANY OF US TO BRING THE WITCH DOWN.

KA-
CHUNK

THE WITCH CLEA
LOOKS HUMAN,
BUT SHE IS NOT. DID
YOU KNOW THAT?

EVEN WHEN
SHE FELL, WE COULD
NOT **CONSUME** HER.
EVERYONE WHO TRIED
WAS **BURNED**
ALIVE.

BUT HER
BLOOD GOES
DOWN JUST
FINE.

AND THE
POWER IT BRINGS
IS **MORE** THAN ENOUGH
TO FOOL A STUPID COW
LIKE YOU.

Y-YOU'RE...
YOU'RE ONE OF
THEM.

LYCANA'S
CULT.

REMEMBER
LITTLE **NORGUL**?
A HARMLESS RUTLING
IN THE WOODS, WHO
YOU KILLED FOR
NOTHING?

HE HEARD
YOU SPEAK OF
COMING HERE.

AND WHEN
ONE OF **US**
HEARS YOU...

...**ELDEST**
HEARS YOU
AS WELL.

SPACK

SPURK

APP
WHIPP



MURDERING
LITTLE *THIEF*. DID
YOU THINK WE WOULD
EVER STOP HUNTING
YOU?

YAAAAAUUGH!!!

WE WOULD
NEVER HAVE
STOPPED HUNTING
YOU.



YOU WERE
NOT THE *FIRST*
TO TAKE THE GODSKIN
BY FORCE.

BUT EVERY
VESSEL OF LYCANA
GETS *ONE CYCLE*
OF THE MOON AND
NO MORE. THAT IS
THE *LAW*.



YES!
FLAY HER,
SISTER!

TAKE
BACK THE
GODSKIN AND
BE DONE!

YOU'RE...
BACK?



BANNER
IS DEAD,
THEN?



OH,
YES.

SPLIT OPEN
FROM BELLY TO
BRAINS, NOT A
MORSEL LEFT
BEHIND. PITY YOU
MISSED IT.

...WHAT?!

TELL ME
YOU DIDN'T
EAT HIM!

YOU LEFT
HIS REMAINS
BEHIND, YES?
UNCONSUMED?



W-WELL...
NO. WE ATE
HIM.

HE'S GONE,
SISTER. NOTHING
TO WORRY AB--



ROOAAAARRR



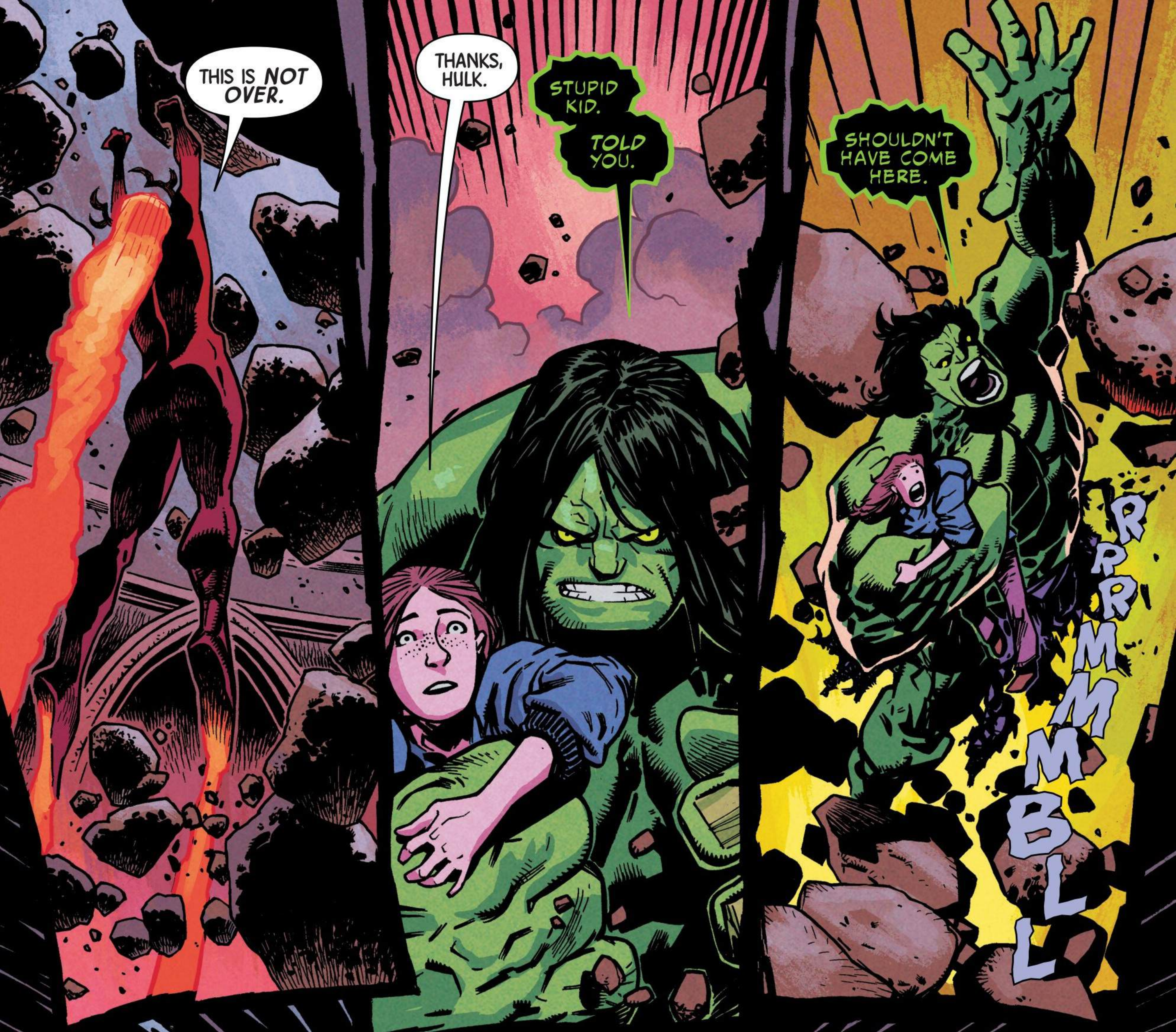
RRRMMMMBBBLLLL

THE
GODSKIN IS
OURS!!!

THE GIRL'S
FLESH
IS OURS!!!

AND THE
WITCH
IS OURS AS
WELL!!!

ELDEST
STILL LIVES,
FRACTURED
SON.



THIS IS NOT OVER.

THANKS, HULK.

STUPID KID.

TOLD YOU.

SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE.



COMING, ELDEST.

I WILL NOT LET THE GREEN BRUTE TAKE ME.

I'M COM--

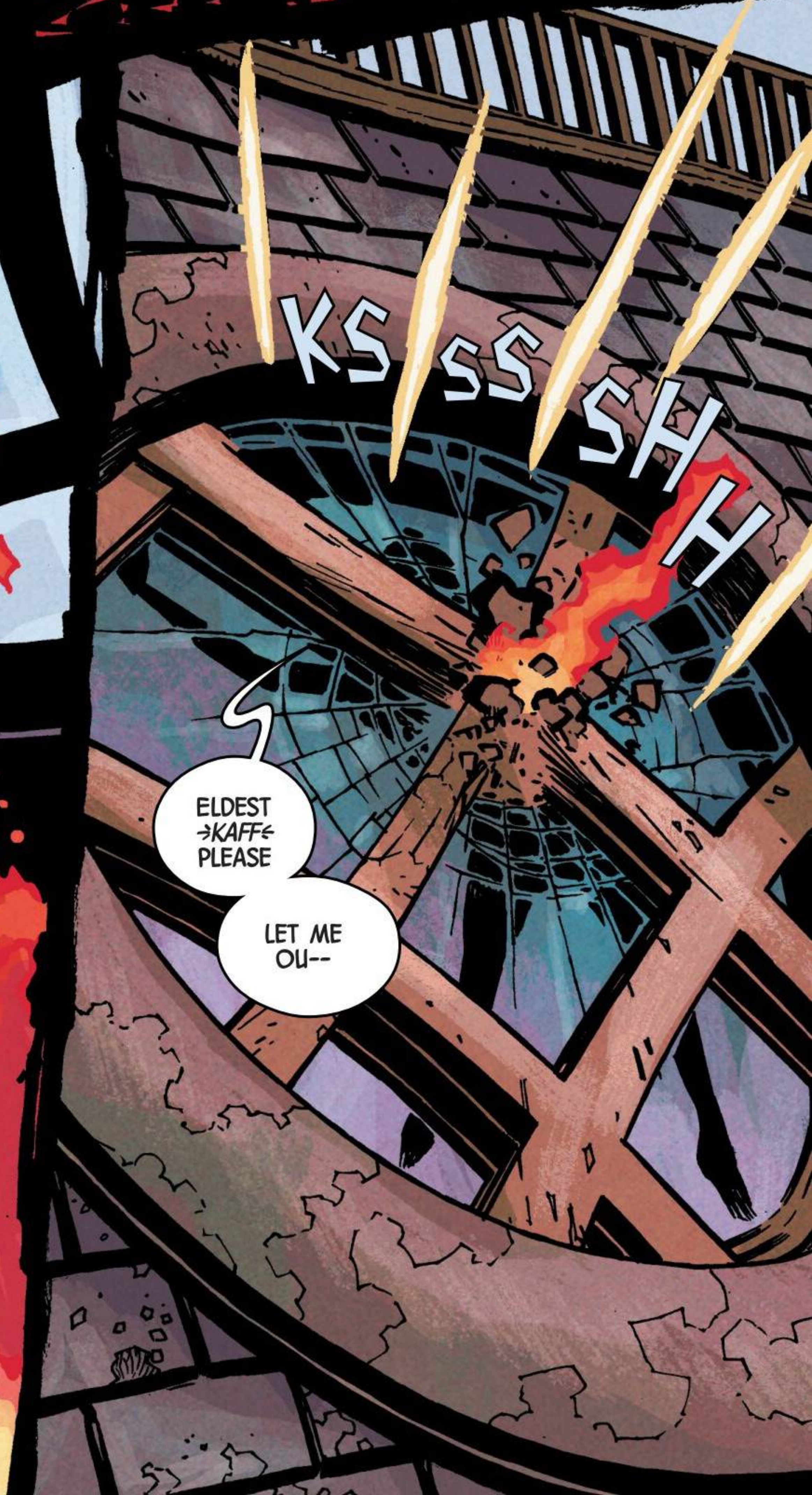
WHAP P P



N-NO



GET AWAY FROM



ELDEST
→KAFF←
PLEASE

LET ME
OU--



FWHLUMP

HEY.
PUNCHING-
BAG HAG
MONSTER.

DON'T
DIE YET.



WE CAME HERE TO SEE **DOCTOR STRANGE**. WHEN BANNER ASKED, YOU SAID HE WAS FAR AWAY.

WHAT DID YOU MEAN, "FAR AW--"?

STRANGE IS IN MY LANDS, CREATURE.



BUT YOU WILL ENTREAT WITH ME.



NO... WAY.

HRRNN.

I THOUGHT US ALLIES, HULK.

YET NOW YOU PROTECT **THIS FOUL CREATURE**, BORN FROM THE DEFILED BONES OF MY KIN.

SURRENDER THE BEAST NAMED **LYCANA**...

...LEST
HER FATE
BE *YOURS*, AS
WELL.





INCREDIBLE HULK #22 ANIMATED-STYLE VARIANT BY MARK BROOKS



THEN.

AS MEN MUST DIE SO GODS MUST DIE
AS SURELY AS HIS OXEN DIES A KING

THE GREAT, THE WISE THE BATTLE-BOLD
SERF, SLAVE AND NOBLE, ALL WHOM LIFE HAS BLESSED

AS FATE IS SPUN UPON HER LOOM
BLACK BLADE HANGS EVER OVER BRITTLE THREAD

EAGER EVER FOR ITS MOMENT





A NOBLE NAME GREAT DEEDS IN SONG
WE FIGHT, FOR THESE ALONE WE LEAVE BEHIND



LET SHRIEK THE HAWK LET ROAR THE BEAST



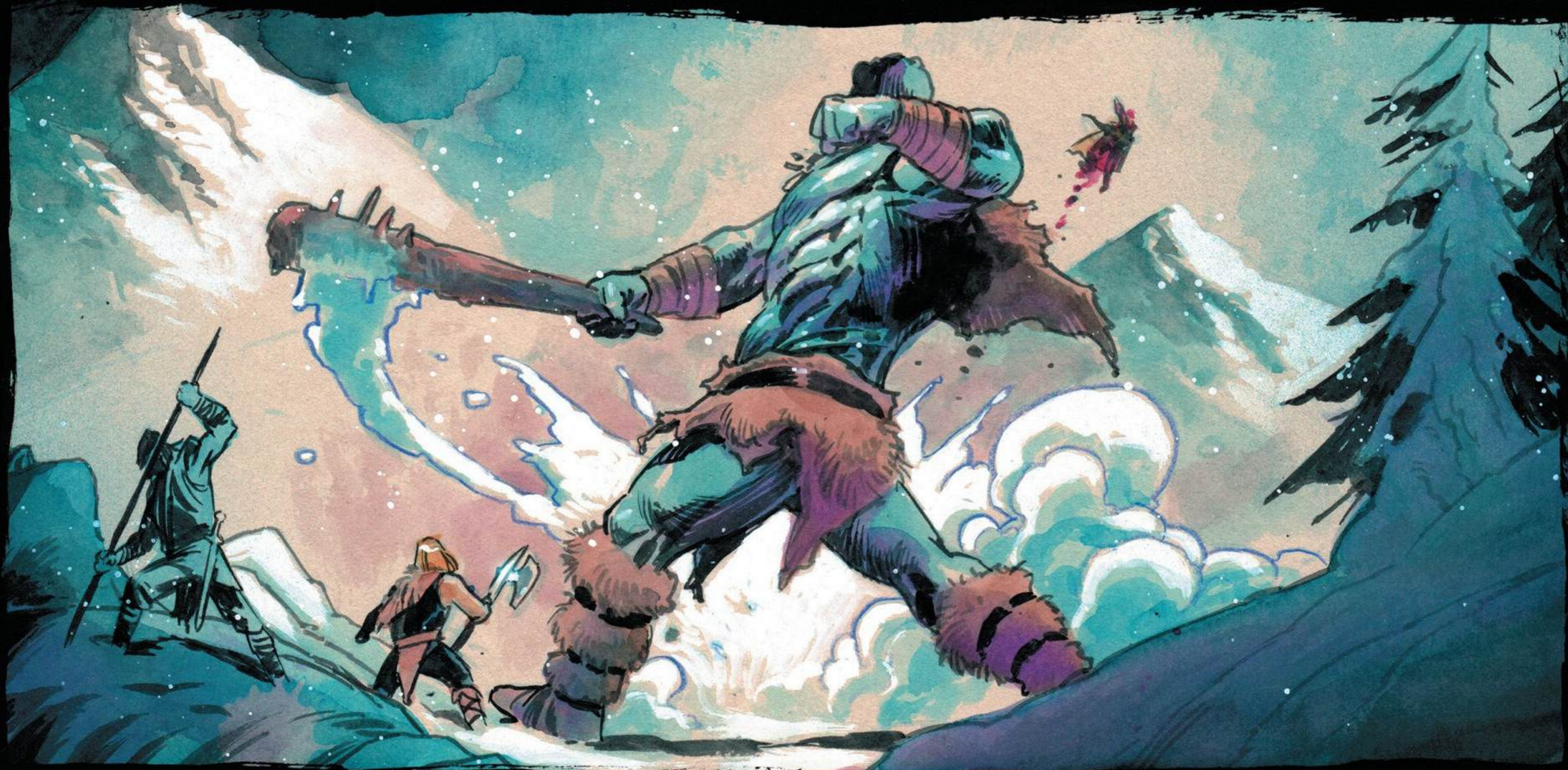
WITHIN OUR FLESH THE WOLVES OF ODIN CRY



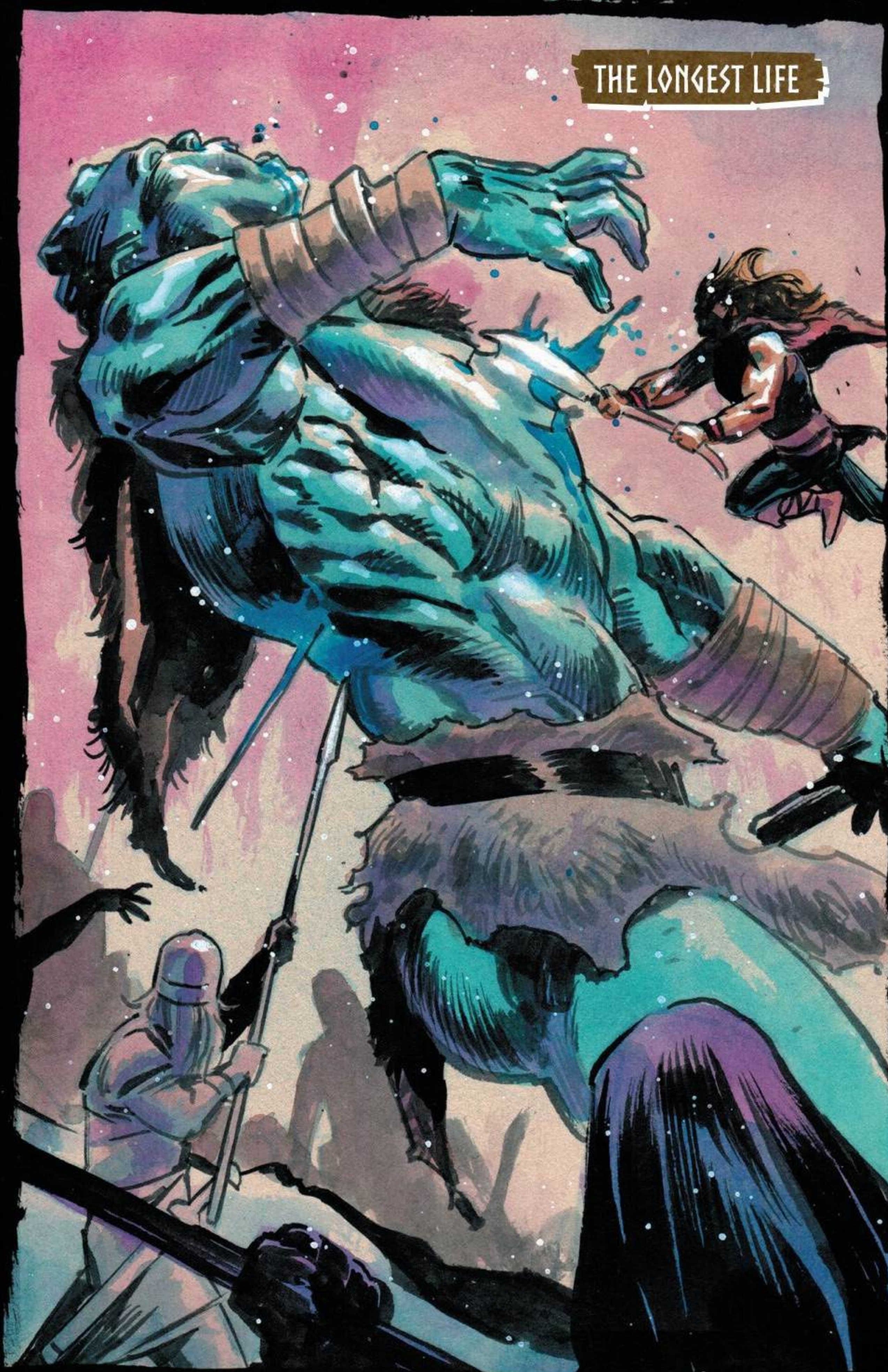
SPURN RING OF GOLD AND HOUSE OF STONE



THEIR MASTERS WILL THEY FOLLOW INTO DUST



THE LONGEST LIFE

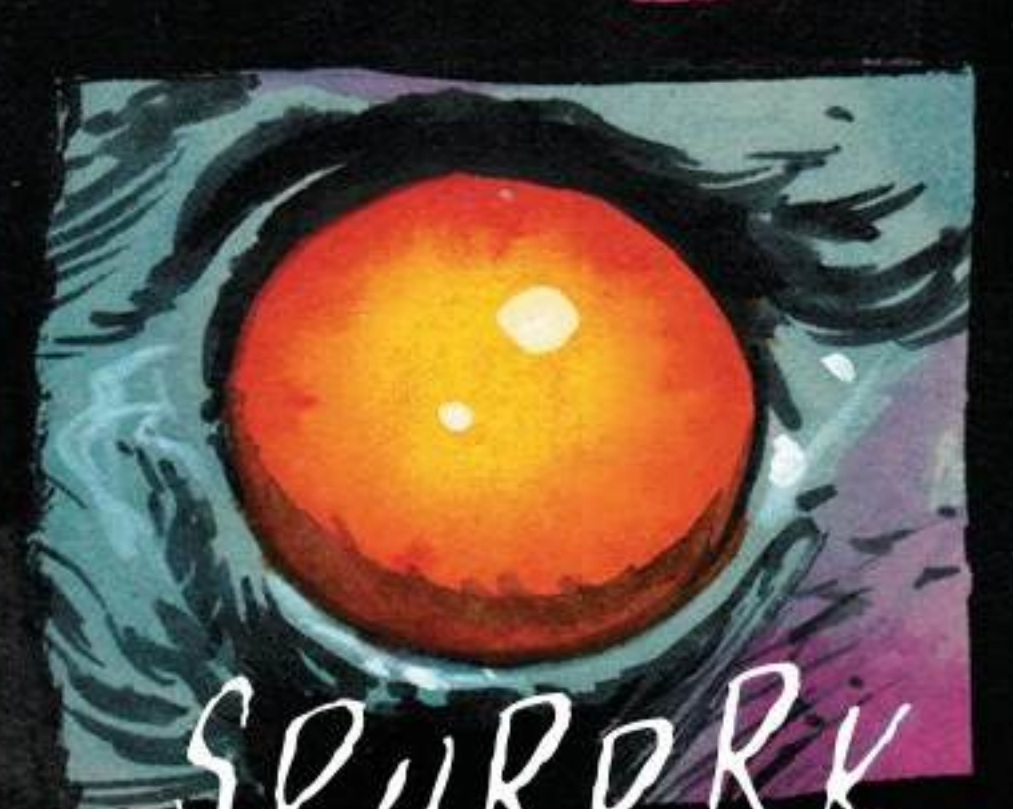


BUT FLICK'RING FLAME



WHEN GUTTERED DOES IT KNOW ETERNITY.





NOW.

H-HOLY
CRAP. YOU'RE
THOR.

WE CAME
LOOKING FOR
DOCTOR STRANGE, BUT
THESE THINGS WERE
WAITING FOR US, AND...
YOU SAID THE DOC IS WITH
YOU IN ASGARD?
CAN WE--



LIE NOT
TO ME, VALRAVN.
I REMEMBER YOU
VERY WELL.

WHEN LAST
WE MET, THEN
TOO DID YOU WEAR
THE FACE OF A GIRL
YOU HAD SLAIN.

I THOUGHT
I SLEW YOU
THEN...

...BUT
HAPPILY
WILL I BREAK
THY BONES
AGAIN.





KID'S WITH ME, THOR. GO AWAY.

IT IS NO CHILD, HULK. THE VALRAVN DECEIVES YOU.

IT IS A DEMON THAT STEALS THE FACE AND FORM OF ITS PREY.

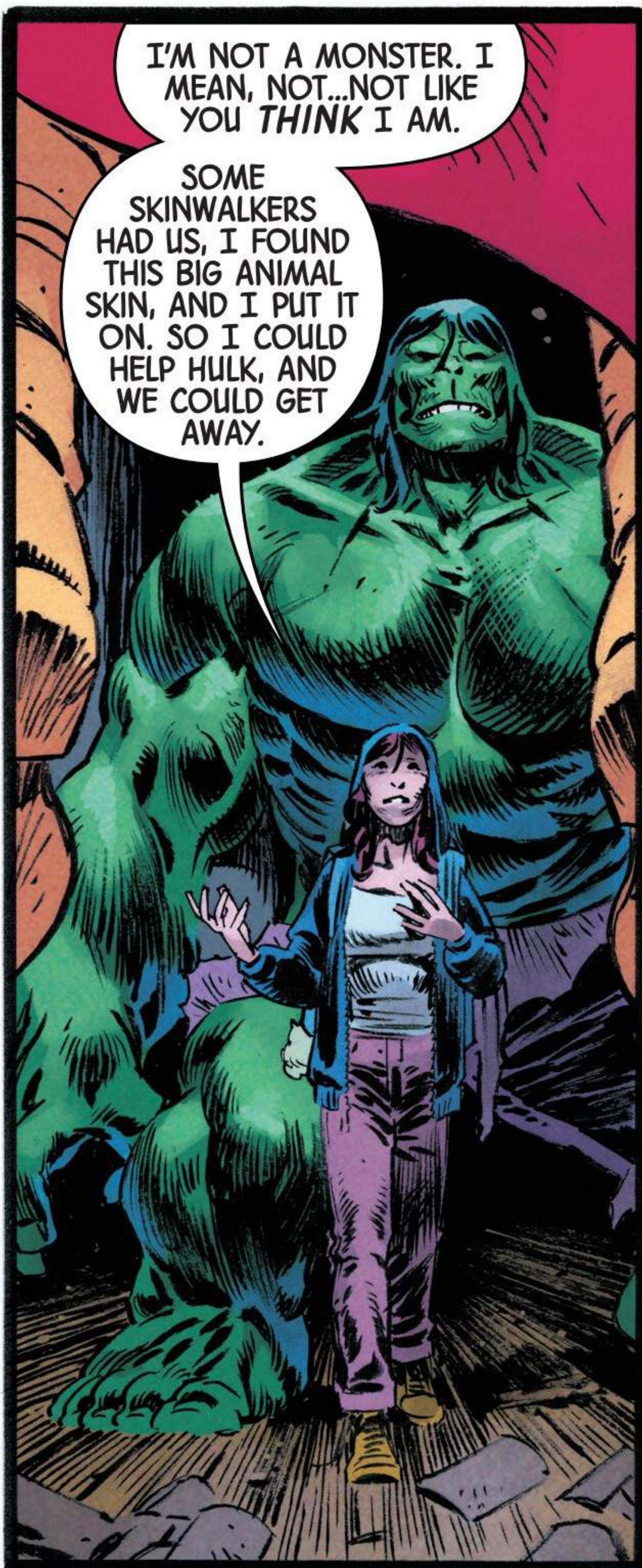


SHE'S WITH ME.

GO AWAY.

HULK. IT'S OKAY.

THOR, LISTEN. I'M NOT WHAT YOU THINK.



I'M NOT A MONSTER. I MEAN, NOT...NOT LIKE YOU THINK I AM.

SOME SKINWALKERS HAD US, I FOUND THIS BIG ANIMAL SKIN, AND I PUT IT ON. SO I COULD HELP HULK, AND WE COULD GET AWAY.



I CAME HERE TO FIND DOCTOR STRANGE, 'CAUSE I THOUGHT MAYBE HE COULD HELP ME CONTROL IT BETTER.

WE'RE GOOD GUYS. LIKE YOU, AND CAPTAIN AM--

LIES.



BUT YOU ARE OF ASGARD, TO OUR SHAME. BORN OF THE DEFILED CORPSE OF MY KINSMAN, AGMUNDR.

YOU WILL RETURN WITH ME TO ASGARD FOR JUDGMENT...AND WE WILL LEARN THE TRUTH OF YOUR WORDS.







GOD OF THUNDER



SON OF WRATH



EACH DESTINED E'ER TO TEST THE OTHER'S MIGHT



IN TIMES OF OLD SUCH SONGS WERE SUNG

THE TIMELESS ONES DO BATTLE YET
BUT FEW REMAIN WITH FAITH ENOUGH TO SEE

WE FEEL BUT RAIN, THE WIND AND SNOW

OF GODS AND DEMONS,

BATTLES IN THE SKY

AS GIANTS AND IMMORTALS SHAKE THE EARTH

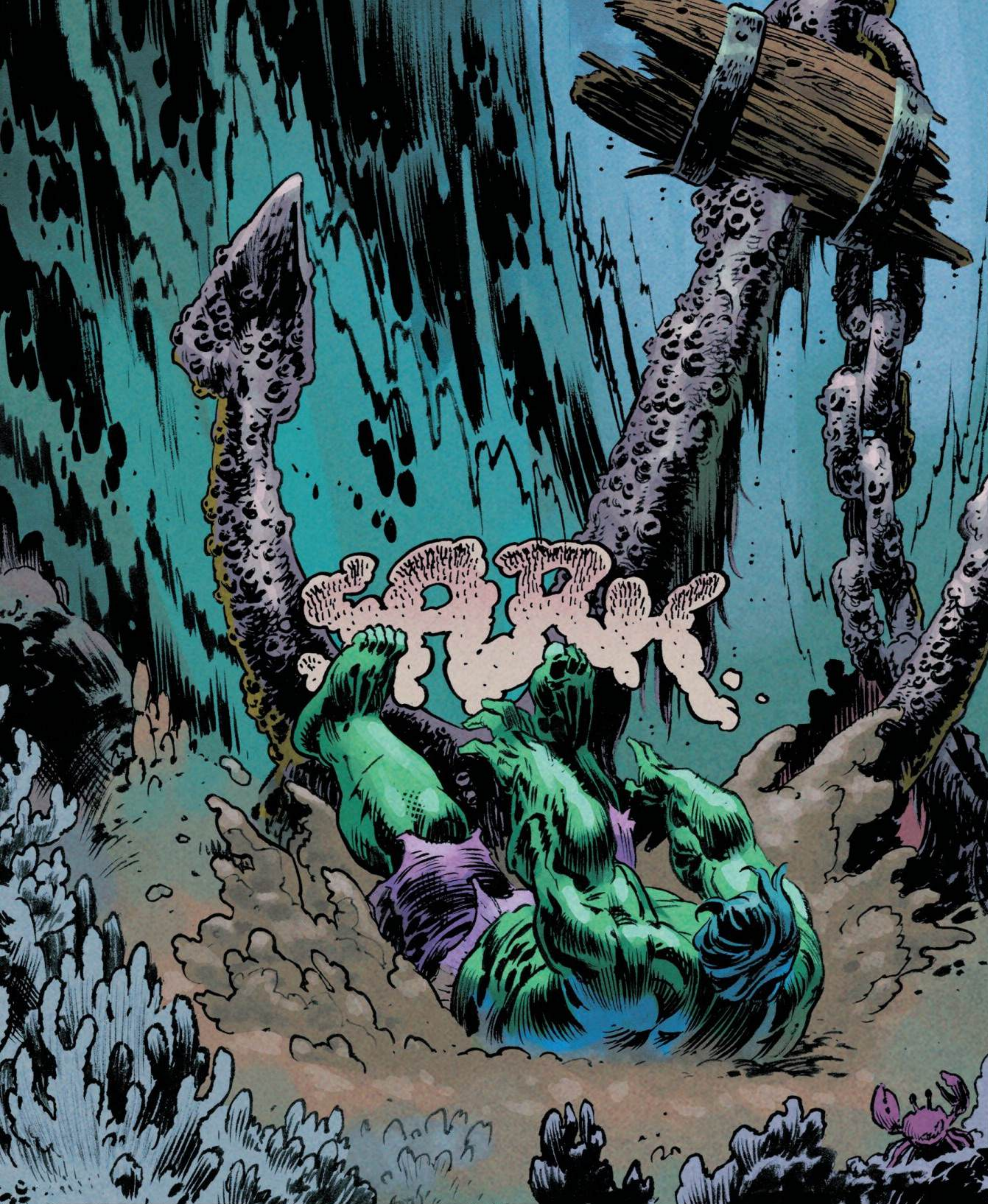
WAAHOO

WHEN MAN IS GONE OUR TOWERS FELLED

OUR MIGHTY WORKS RETURNED UNTO THE SEA

STILL WILL THEY FIGHT THESE RIVALS TWO

THO NONE REMAIN TO SING THEIR MEMORY.



YOU HAVE *CHANGED* OF LATE, OLD FRIEND. UNTETHERED FROM BANNER, AND FROM HUMANKIND.

THE FRACTURE SERVES YOU ILL.



I DO NOT CALL YOU ENEMY, HULK. EVEN NOW. BUT THE VALRAVN IS *mine* TO DEAL WITH.

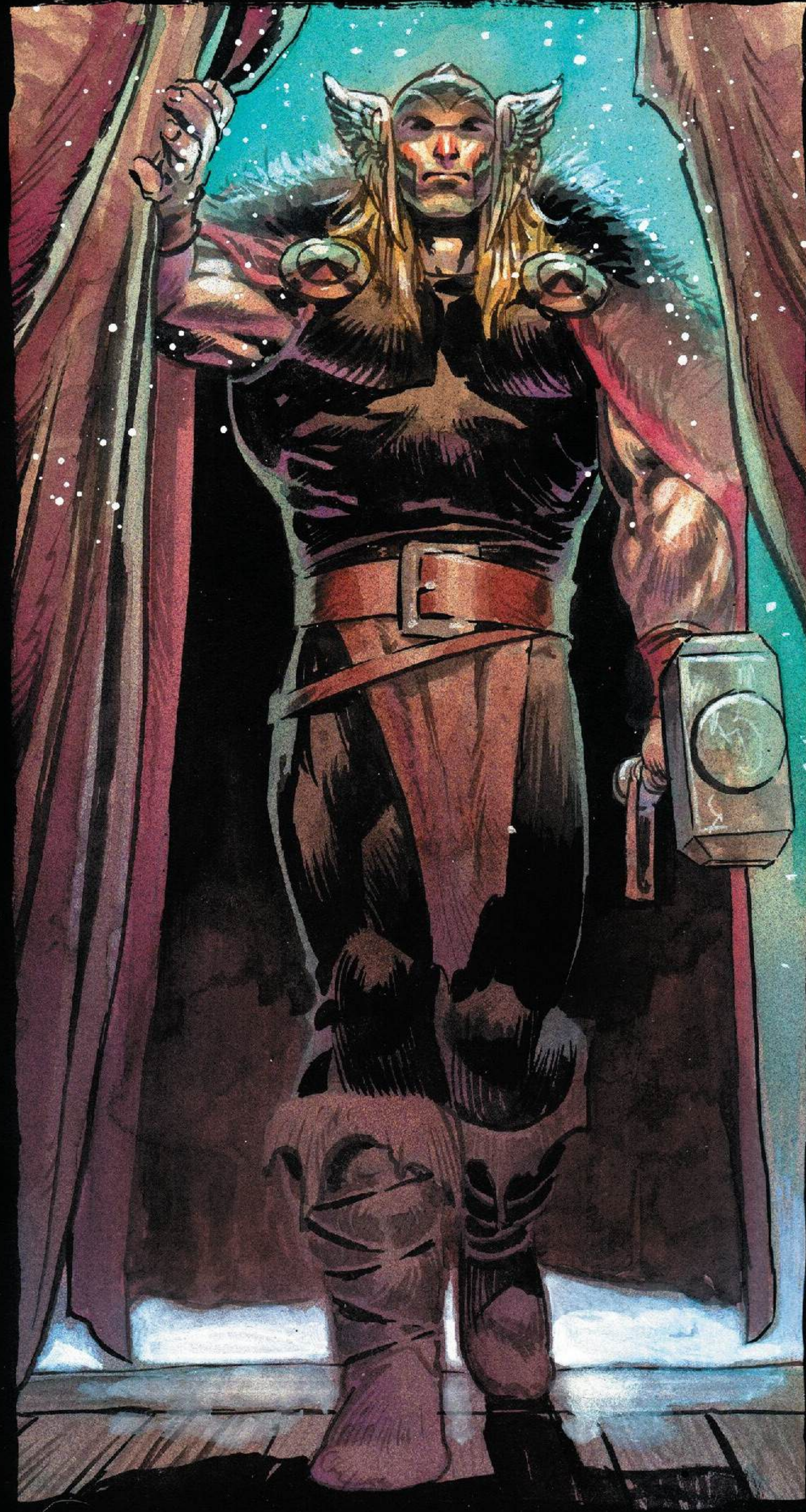
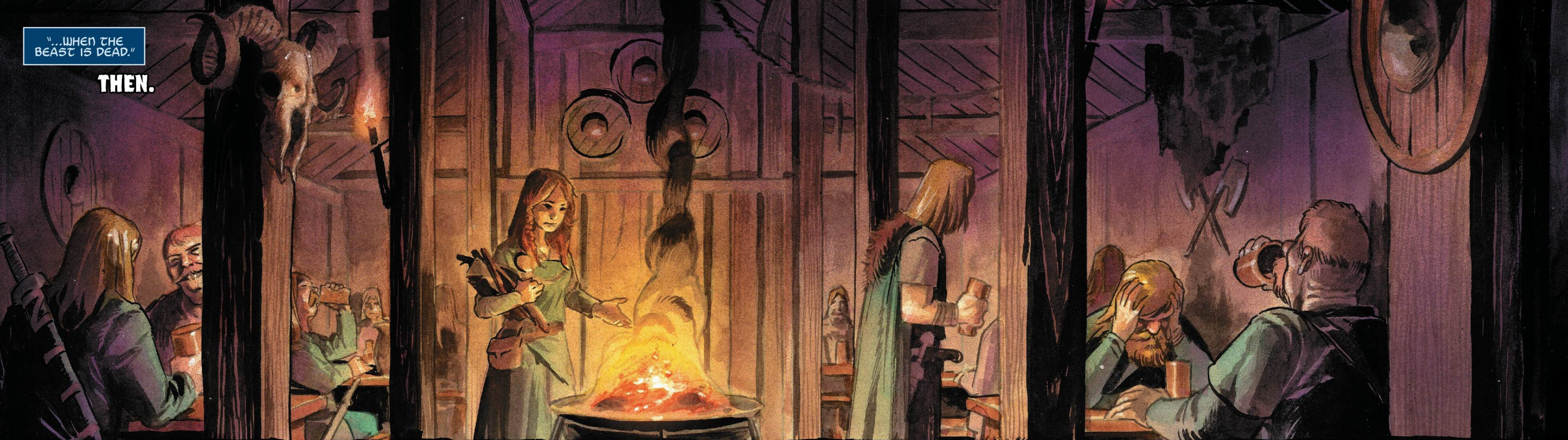


DO NOT FOLLOW US.

I WILL FORGIVE THEE...

"...WHEN THE BEAST IS DEAD."

THEN.



WARRIOR.
WHAT BRINGS
THEE?

FIRE.
MEAD.



AND
STORIES OF
A VALRAVN.

BEAST FROM
HEL, IT IS. IT'LL
HAVE US ALL BY
THE END.

THE VALRAVN
TOOK MY WIFE'S
COUSIN.

TOOK MY
APPRENTICE,
NOT A MAN GROWN.
DRUG OFF IN THE NIGHT,
TRAIL OF BLOOD ALL
THE WAY TO THE DOOR.



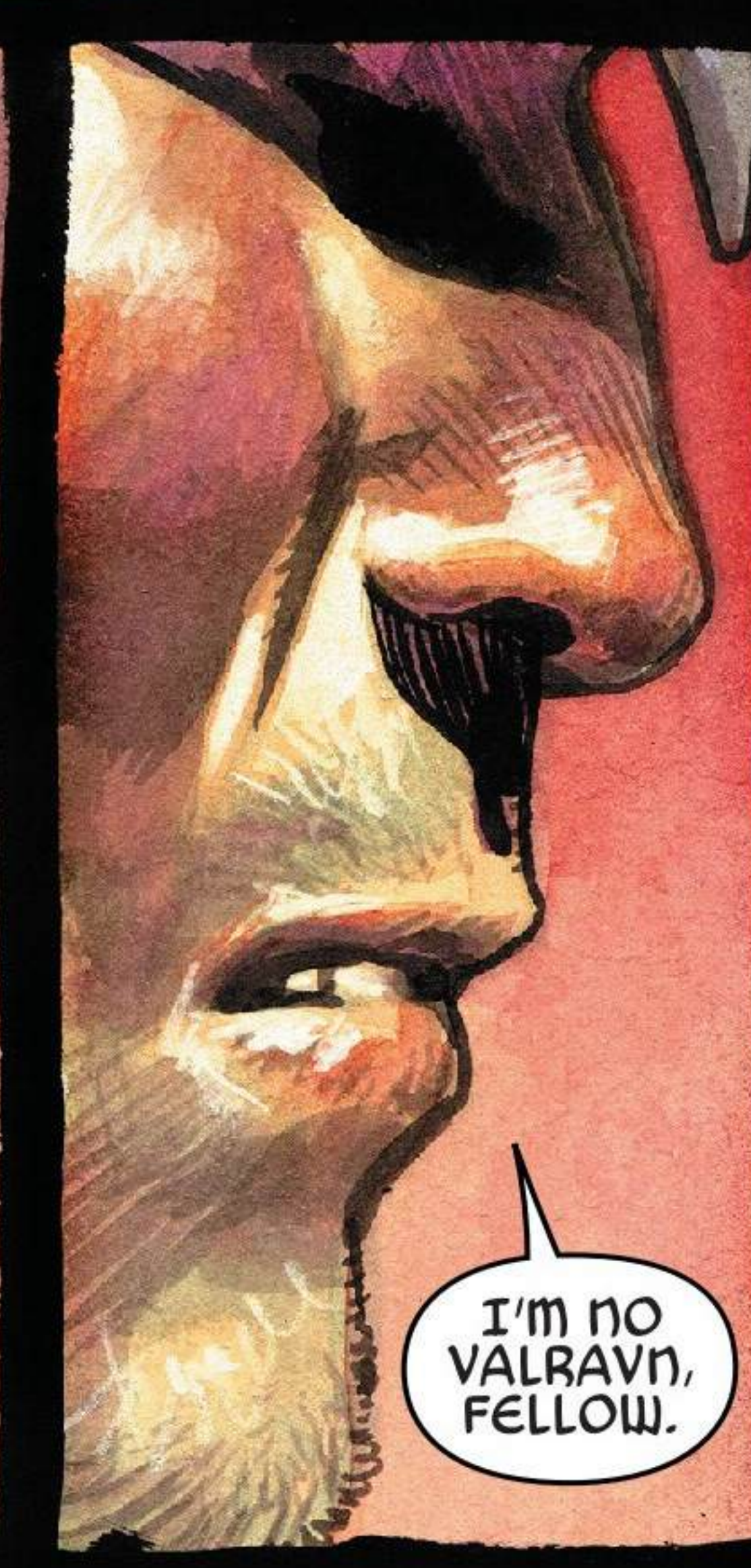
ARNE
SEEN IT WITH HIS
OWN EYES!

A GREAT
WOLF THE SIZE OF
A BEAR, WITH WINGS
LIKE A RAVEN'S!

FIE. OLD
ARNE'S HALF
BLIND AND ALL
FOOL.

I HEARD
IT TAKES A
MAN'S SHAPE WHEN IT
WANTS CLOSE...

...A GREAT
BRUTE OF A
WARRIOR.



I'M NO
VALRAVN,
FELLOW.



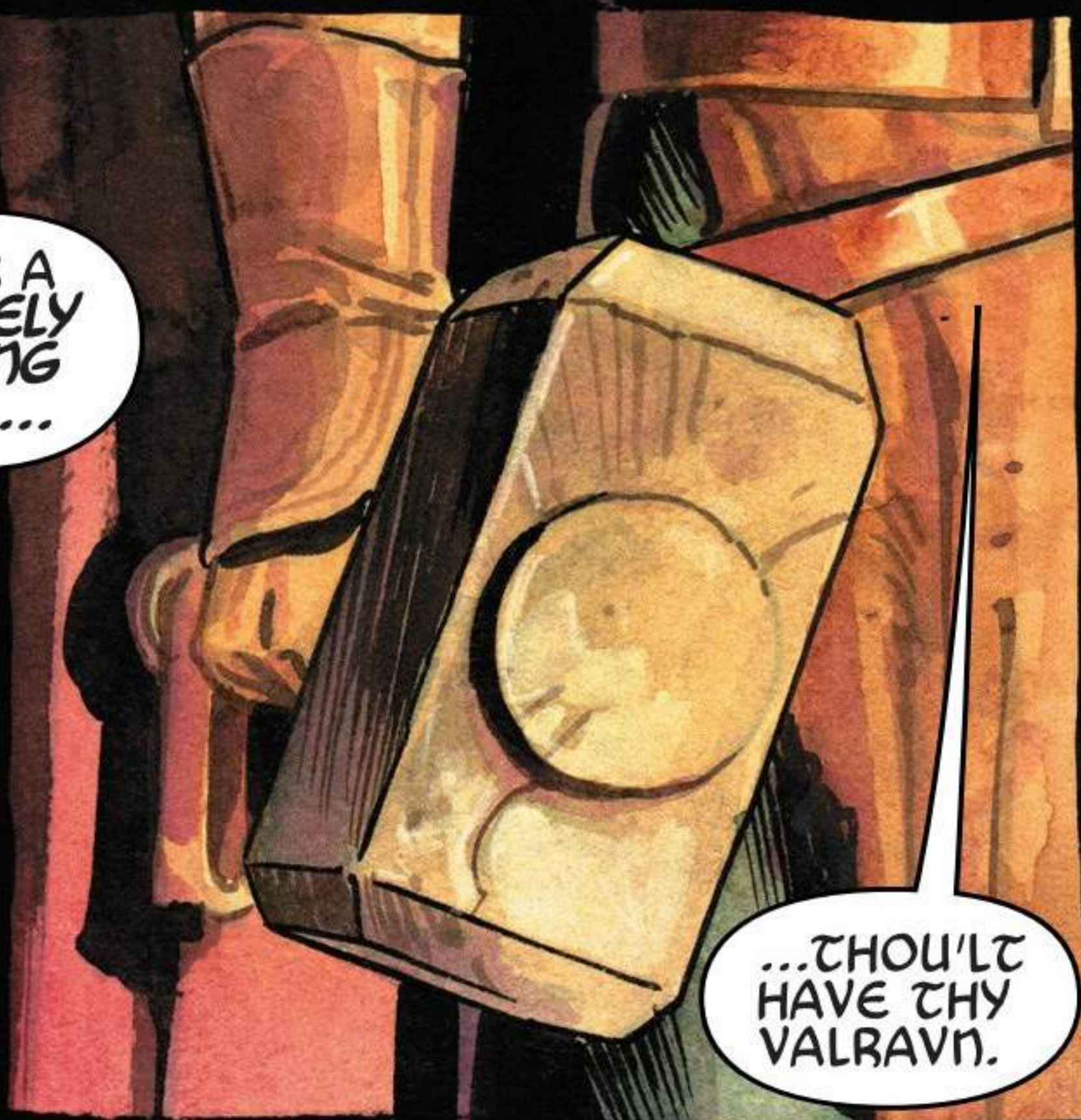
BUT I'LL
TELL THEE
HOW TO FIND
ONE.

SEEK A
MANE OF HAIR
LIKE A BEAST'S FUR,
SO THICK THE RAIN
ROLLS OFF IT. MY
KINSMAN AGMUNDH
HAD SUCH HAIR, THO HE BE
DEAD NOW MANY
YEARS.



FIND A HEAD
OF HAIR LIKE
AGMUNDR'S...AND
THO ITS OWNER
BE A CHILD, AN
OLD BEGGAR...

...OR A
COMELY
YOUNG
GIRL...



...THOU'LT
HAVE THY
VALRAVN.



MY
MOTHER
SPAKE OF
THEE.

A WARRIOR
OF GREAT
STRENGTH...

...RAGE...



KRK SRK
CREEAK



...AND
APPETITES.

I WILL
WEAR THY
PRETTY SKIN
INTO ODIN'S
HALLS...



"...AND GREET ALL MY FATHER'S KIN."

NOW.

HULK!



CRAP.



I'M COMING, HULK.



GRANK

SHRIMP



KA-

KRI



"NO
MONSTER,"
YOU CLAIMED
ON THE
ROOF.



I SEE
THE SAME
CREATURE I
FACED OF
OLD.



I'VE GOT NO BEEF WITH YOU!

WHERE'S HULK?

SPARE ME YOUR MOCKERY, AS IF YOU CARE FOR HIM. A VALRAVN KNOWS ONLY LIES AND HUNGER.



WE TRIED TO WALK AWAY, AND YOU WOULDN'T LET US! WHY CAN'T ANYONE JUST LEAVE US ALONE?

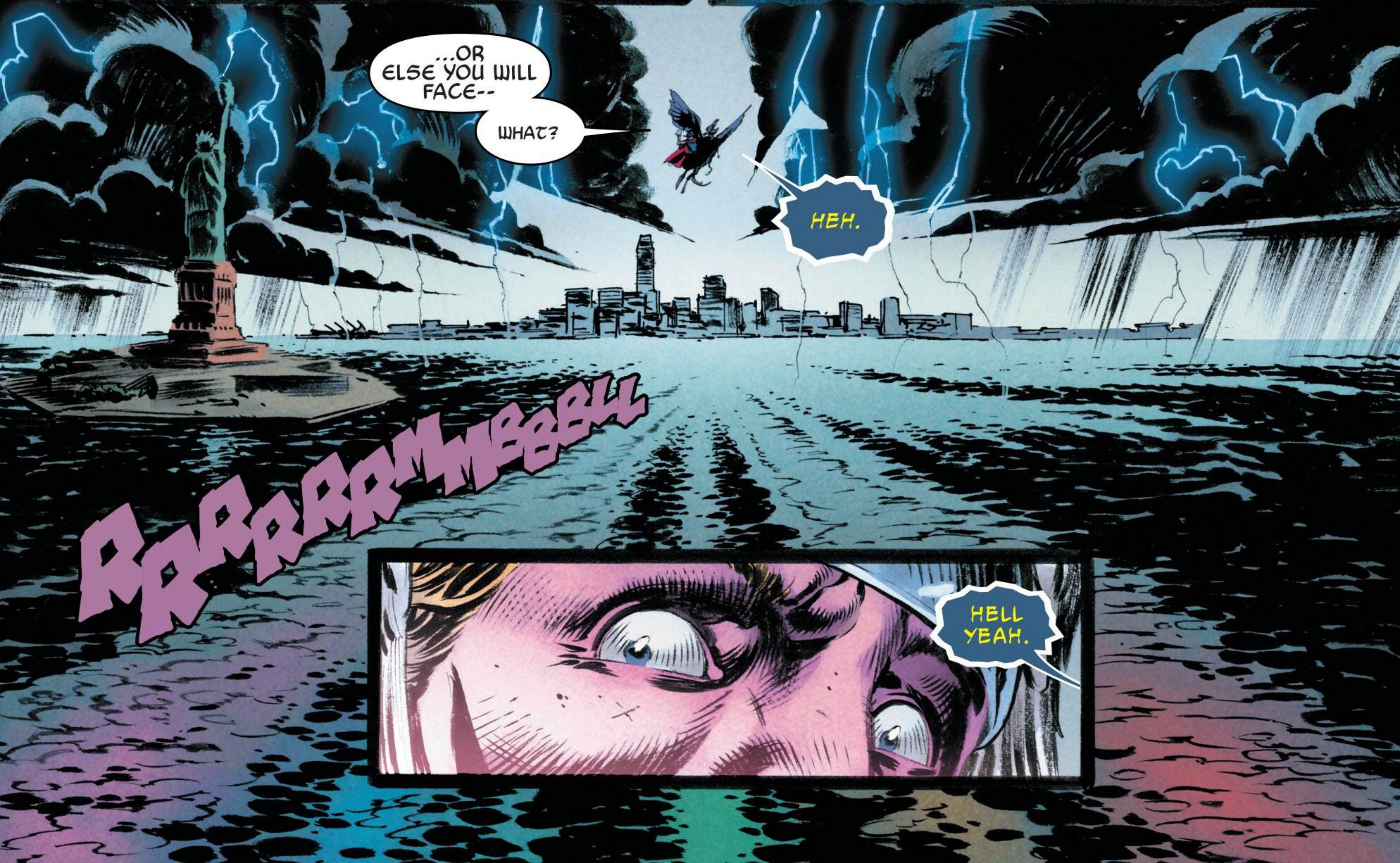
BECAUSE WE'RE NOT THE PRETTY KIND OF FREAK, LIKE YOU?

YOU WERE BORN OF THE DEFILED BONES OF MY KINSMAN! YOUR VERY EXISTENCE PAINS ME!



I WILL NOT LET YOU KILL AGAIN.

IF YOU CLAIM TO BE MORE HUMAN THAN BEAST, COME WITH ME PEACEFULLY BACK TO ASGARD, AND WE WILL FIND THE TRUTH OF IT...



...OR ELSE YOU WILL FACE--

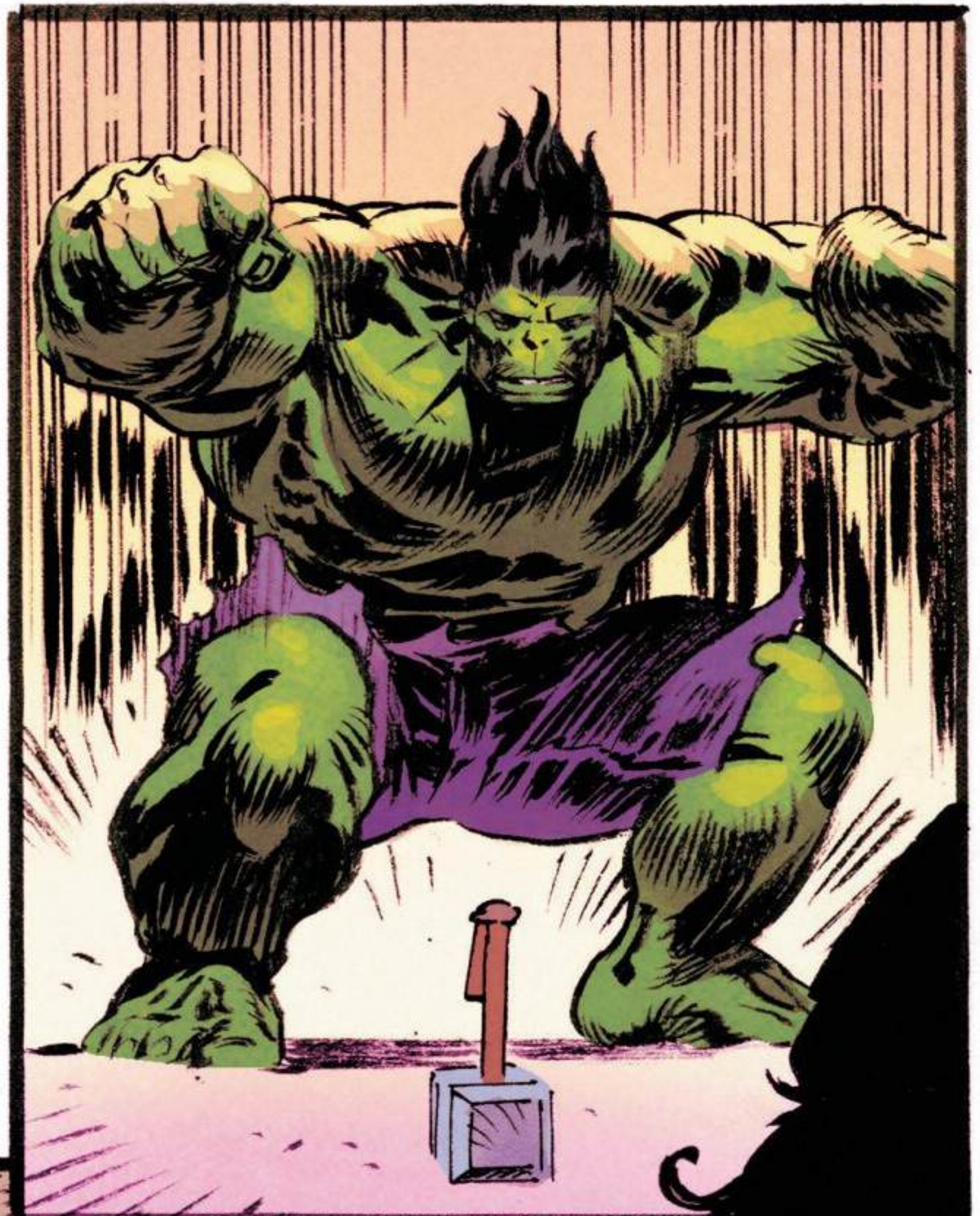
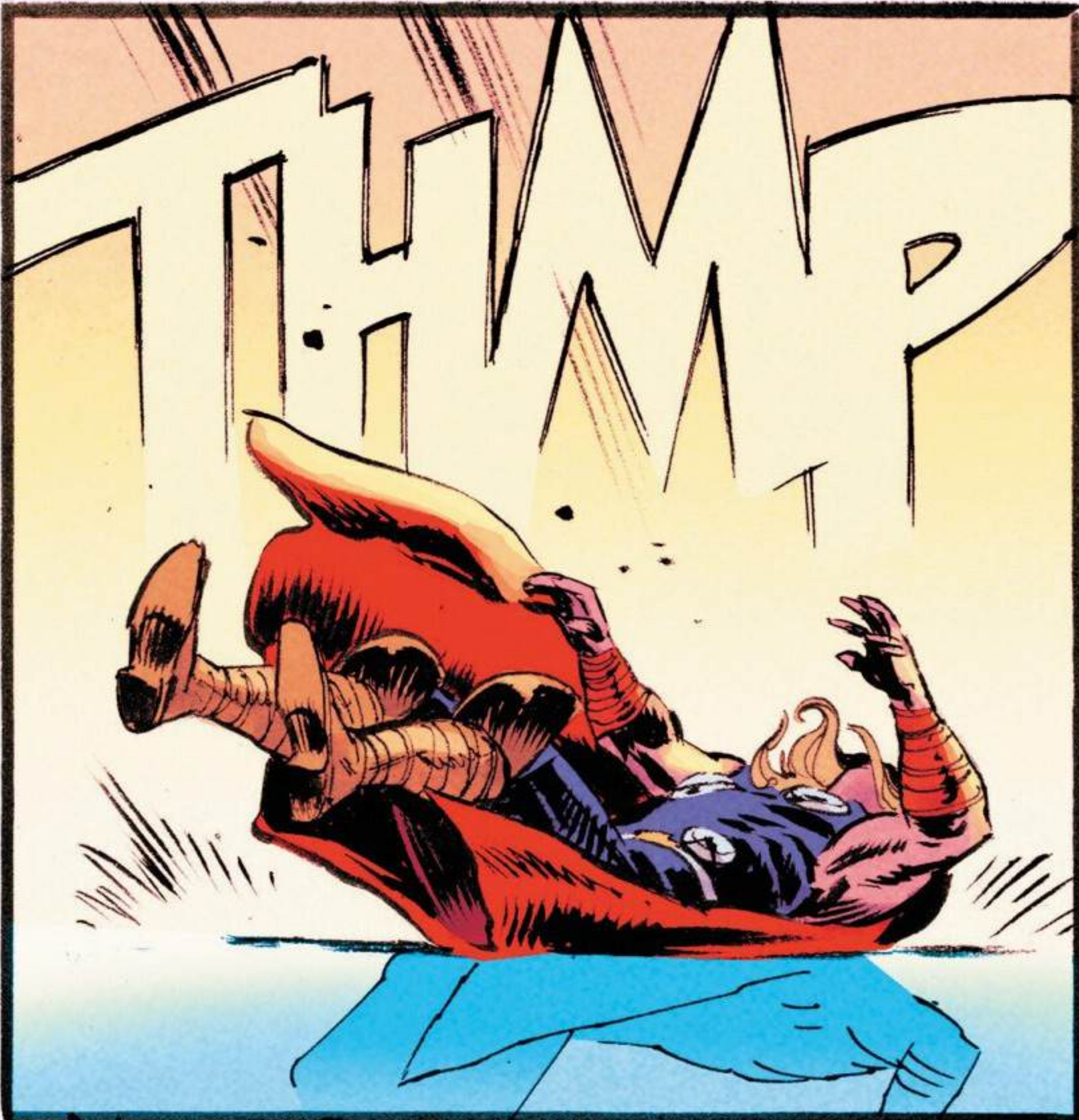
WHAT?

HEH.



HELL YEAH.





MIGHTY THOR!

?



you seem in need of aid!

most certainly.

HMPF.



FOUND YOU THE VALRAVN, THOR?

I DID.



THO NOT ALL
HAS GONE AS
EXPECTED.



IS THE
GREEN ONE...
NOT YOUR
ALLY?

THE
VALRAVN
IS HIS ALLY
NOW.

I...
MAY HAVE
STRUCK
HIM.

AH.

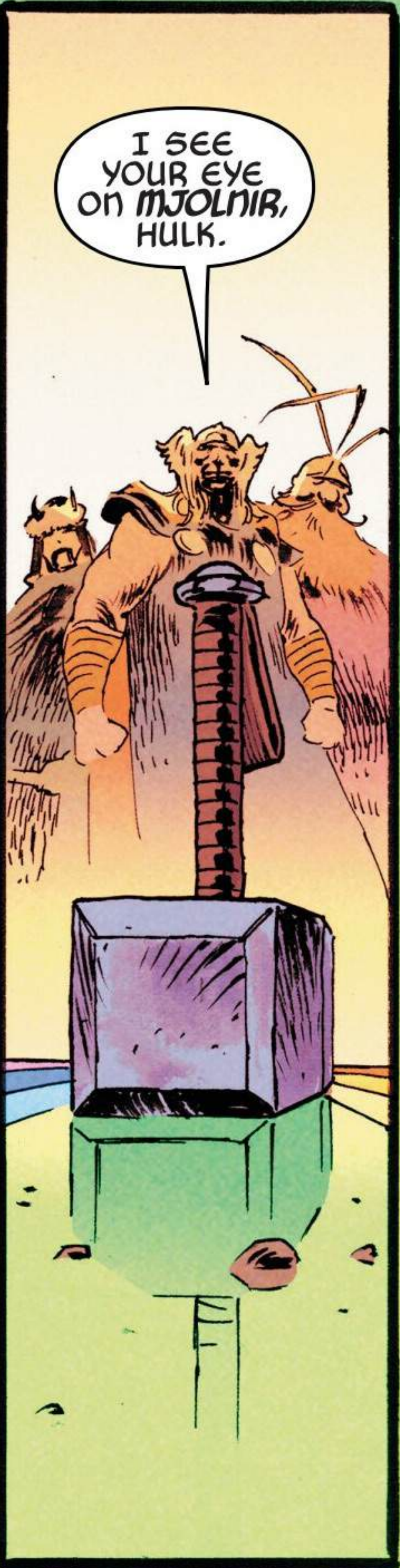
"STRUCK
HIM"?

TO THE
BOTTOM OF
THE OCEAN.



WE DON'T
HAVE TO FIGHT,
HULK. WE'RE
THE GOOD
GUYS. LET'S
JUST GO.

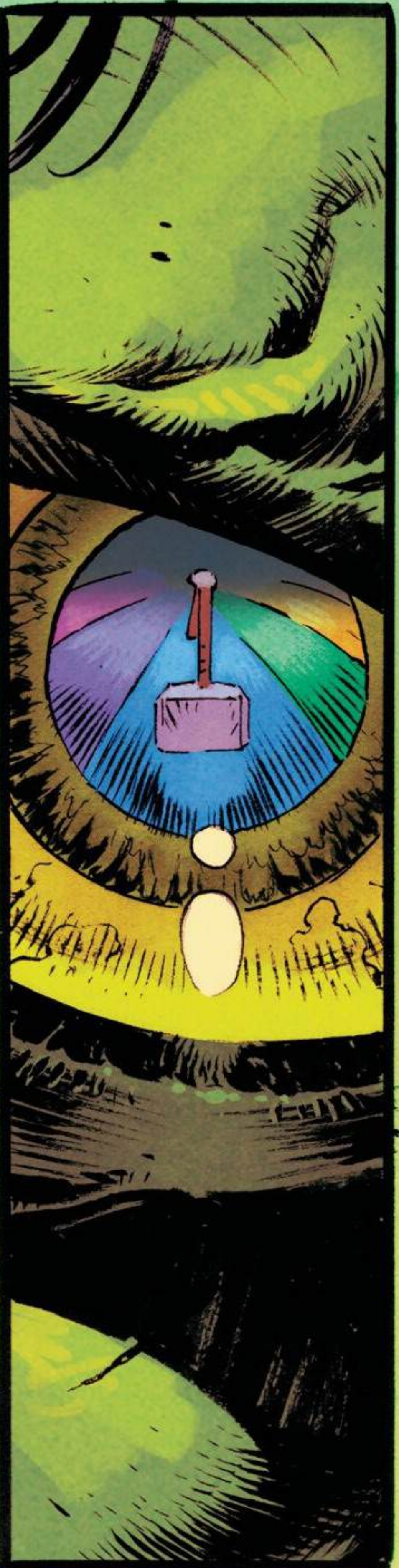
HRRNN.



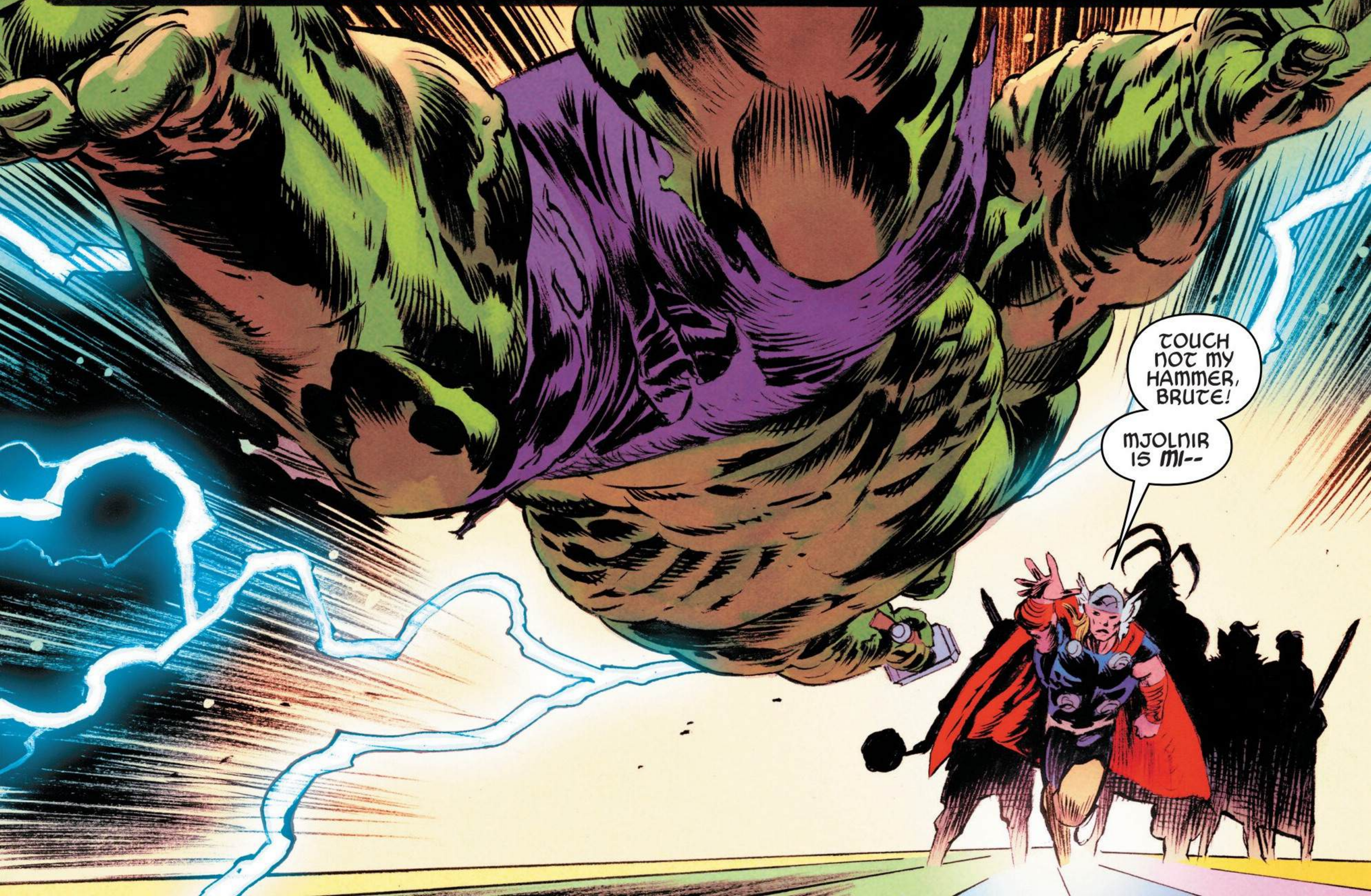
I SEE
YOUR EYE
ON *MJOLNIR*,
HULK.



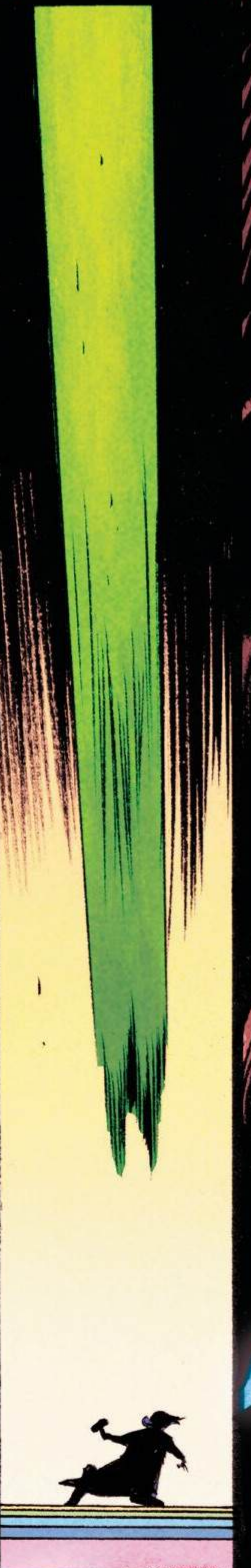
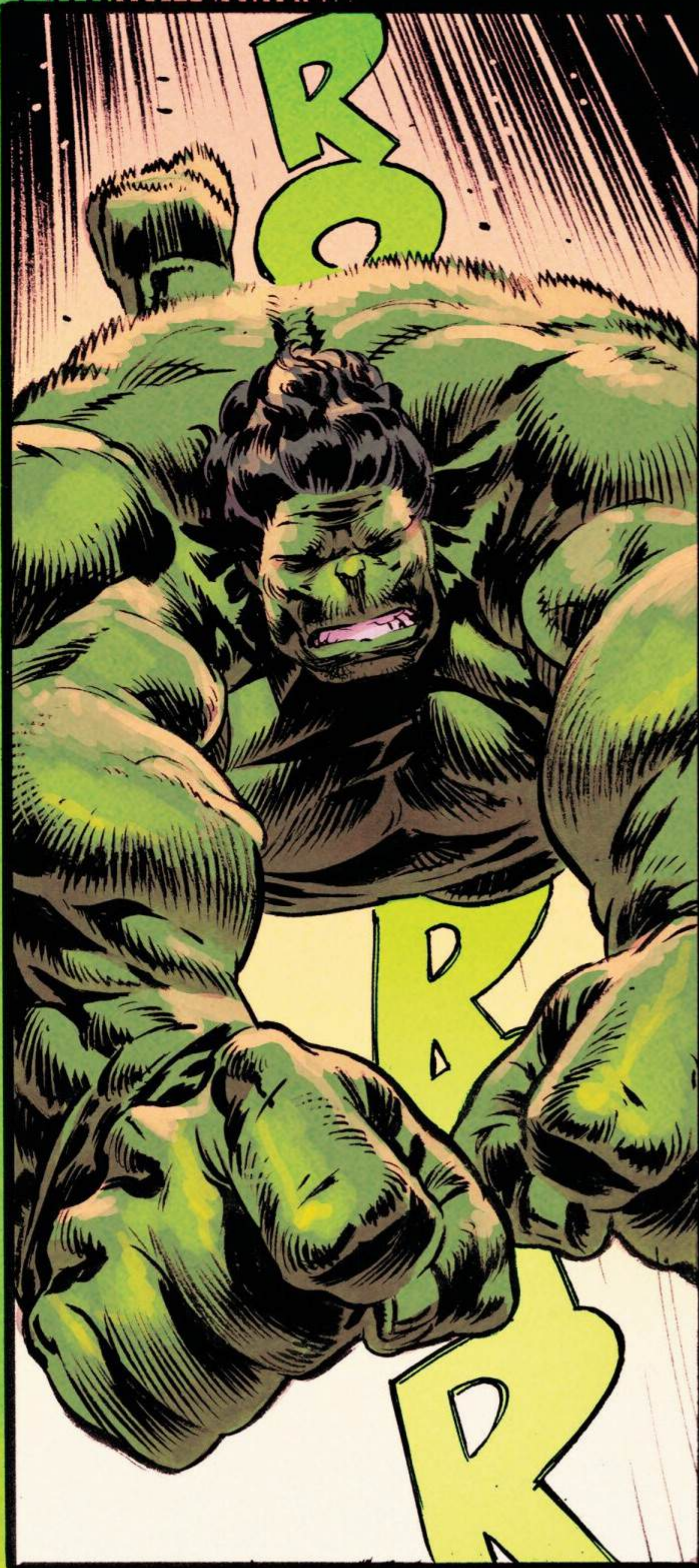
YOU KNOW
AS WELL AS
ANY, NONE BUT
THOR MAY
LIFT IT.



TRY.









HULK,
STOP!!!

WE'RE
NOT MONSTERS
LIKE THEY SAID!
THEY'RE ONLY
FIGHTING BECAUSE
THEY THINK WE
ARE!

WHAT
TRICKERY IS
THIS?

DID THE
BEAST JUST
SAVE HIM?



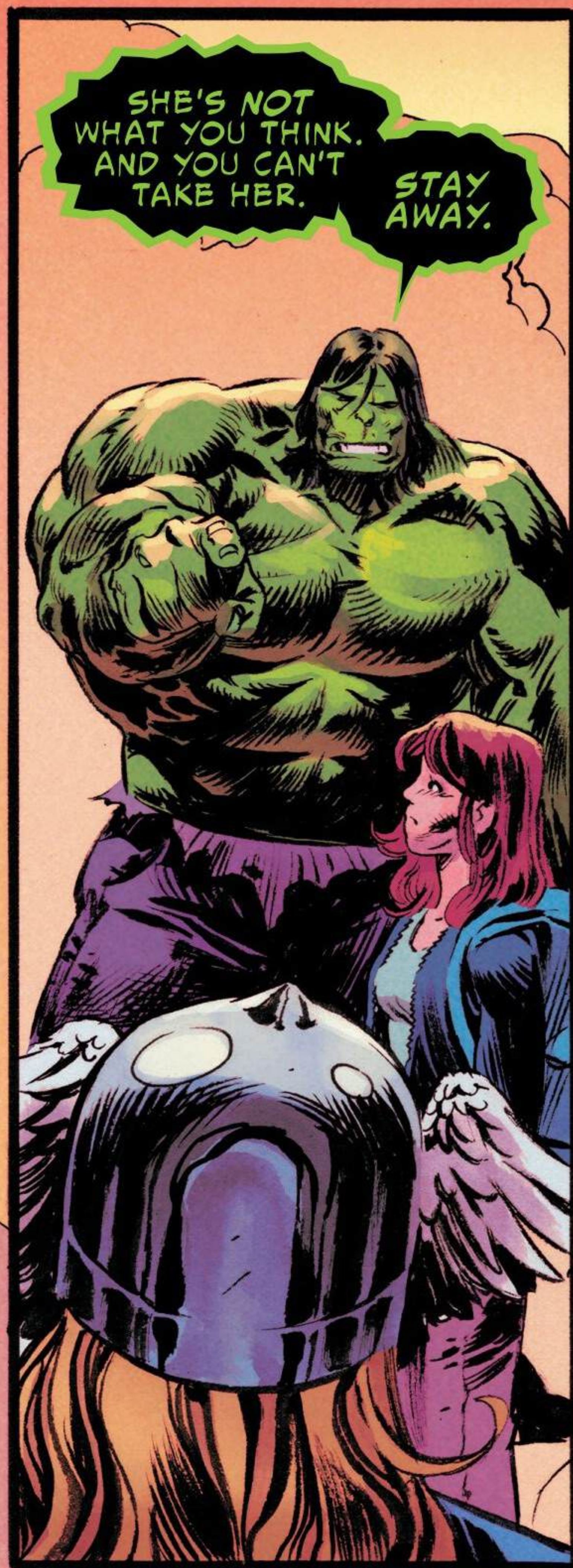
WE'RE THE
GOOD GUYS,
OKAY?!



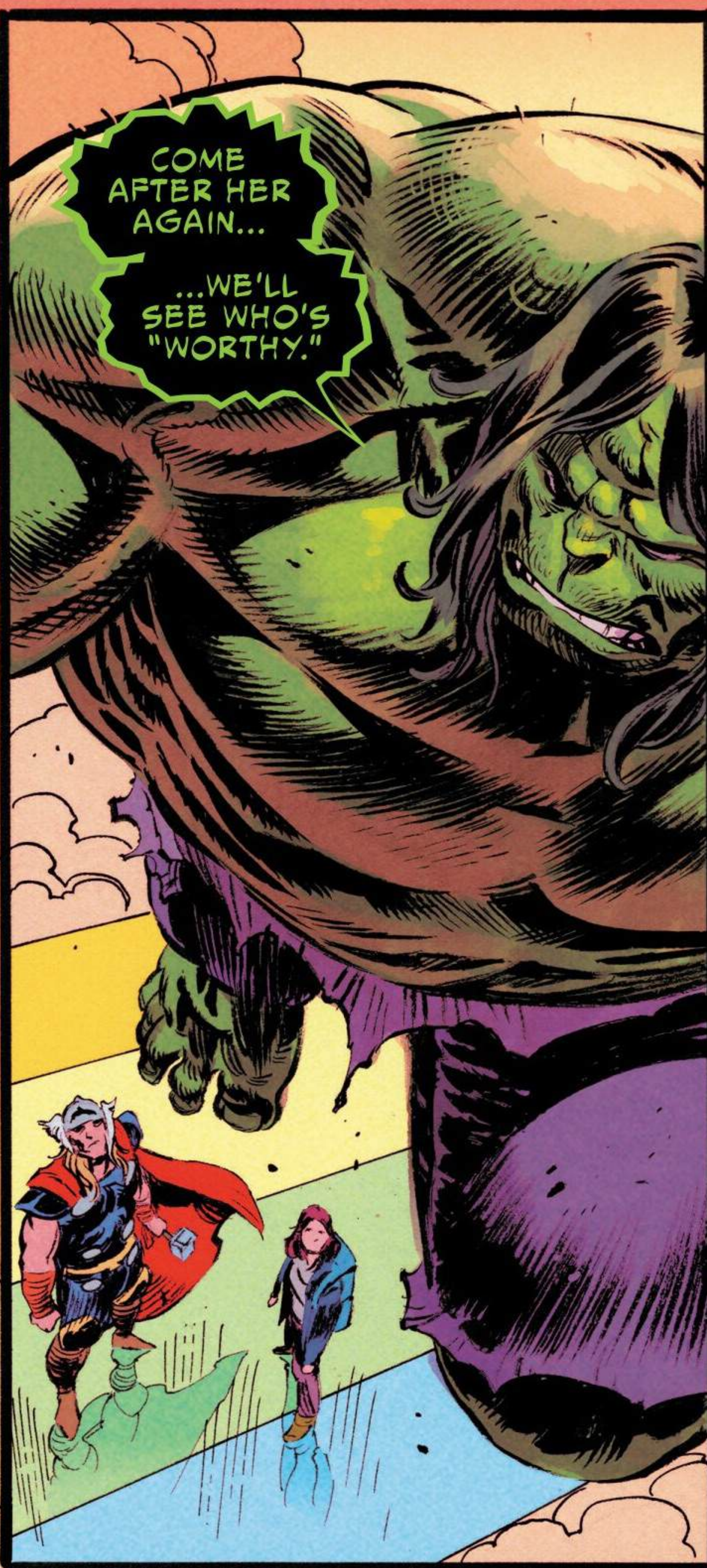
WHUMP
GRRR
SHRIMP



AREN'T
WE?



SHE'S NOT
WHAT YOU THINK.
AND YOU CAN'T
TAKE HER. STAY
AWAY.



COME
AFTER HER
AGAIN...
...WE'LL
SEE WHO'S
"WORTHY."



UM...
TELL DOCTOR
STRANGE WE'RE
REAL SORRY ABOUT
HIS HOUSE.



PERHAPS...
I WAS HASTY.
PERHAPS IT IS NOT
THE BEAST I
FACED OF OLD.

SHE
WEARS THE
SAME SKIN.

BUT
NO LONGER
DRIVEN
BY HUNGER
ALONE...

"...OR AT LEAST,
SHE DESIRES
NOT TO BE."

THAT NIGHT.
THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM.

SQUEEE

WOW.

YEAH, I'D
SAY HE'S BEEN
HERE.

EVENING,
CLEA. VERY
SORRY ABOUT
YOUR--

NATASHA ROMANOFF,
THE BLACK WIDOW.

THE SANCTUM IS DESTROYED
FAIRLY REGULARLY, NATASHA.
THOUGH NOT OFTEN THIS...
THOROUGHLY.

I DON'T
SUPPOSE YOU
KNOW WHERE
BRUCE WAS
GOING?

I SPOKE
NOT A WORD
TO HIM, NOR THE
GIRL. WHEN I AWOKE,
MY CAPTORS WERE
DEAD AND THE
SANCTUM
DESTROYED.

I USED MAGIC
TO LEARN WHAT
HAPPENED IN MY...
ABSENCE.

BANNER'S
STILL WITH THE
KID, THEN. MAYBE
WE CAN USE
THAT.

WE VERY
MUCH NEED TO
SPEAK WITH BANNER,
CLEA. CAN YOU
HELP US?

THAT WOULD
DEPEND ON YOUR
REASON FOR SEEKING
A POWER AS GREAT
AS THE HULK.

**JAMES "BUCKY" BARNES,
THE REVOLUTION.**

I JUST NEED
TO FIND HIM
BEFORE SOMETHING
ELSE DOES.



AT LEAST
**THREE GAMMA-
POWERED INDIVIDUALS**
HAVE GONE MISSING IN THE
PAST TWO WEEKS. ALL THREE
INCIDENTS SHOWED SIGNS
OF A STRUGGLE.

WE DON'T
KNOW WHO'S TAKING
THEM OR WHY. BUT WE
CAN'T RISK THEM
GETTING THEIR HANDS
ON HULK.

THERE'S
ALSO THE
POSSIBILITY
HE'S INVOLVED.
HIM OR THE
GIRL.

HULK IS PROTECTIVE
OF THE CHILD...SEEMS
TO VALUE HER.

IF YOU
WOULD GAIN
HULK'S TRUST,
BEFRIEND THE
GIRL.



GOOD
TO KNOW.

I DON'T
KNOW MUCH
ABOUT THIS
KID...



...BUT
IT'S TIME
TO FIGURE
OUT IF SHE'S
A BUG OR A
FEATURE.

**NEXT:
RETURN OF
THE WINTER
SOLDIER!**

THE REMEMBRANCES OF ELDEST NORGUL OF THE RUTLINGS

In the time before Men, the great trees of the West grew thick and strong, blanketing the land as drops of water filled the sea. A light-footed beast might run limb-to-limb, from the sea to the mountains, and never touch the Earth. As the great trees grew tall, their roots ran deep...deeper than any now can fathom, through soil into stone, and there in the dark they joined together in a web of life more vast than the greatest cities of Men. This place was home to a race now lost called the rutlings.

The rutlings were a meek and peaceful people, small of stature and slight of limb. Their lives were lived in nests and burrows that wove through the roots of the great trees, and they tended the trees dutifully. So attuned to the trees were they, that through their roots the rutlings heard them singing...a language like wind, or like the tides, though the rutlings knew nothing of such things. But they knew well the song of the ancient trees, and drew wisdom from it.

Ages passed, and at last into the West came Men, with their weapons and tools and the trick of fire. The rutlings paid Men little regard, for they saw nothing to fear in them. They saw only Men's foolishness, their clumsiness, their cruelty to each other and even to themselves. The rutlings knew it would not be long before the winters took them, or they all killed each other.

But the trees saw in Men a low cunning...an ambition and savagery that made them afraid. As Men's numbers grew, the song of the trees grew quieter, and still quieter, until at last they fell silent.

Without the divine song, the rutlings forgot the peace and wisdom of the trees. Some wrapped themselves in the great roots and fell silent with them. Others dug still deeper into the Earth and made new homes within caves of stone, or within the churning soup below. But others climbed at last out of the ground, to see the human brutes who had driven their beloved trees to stillness.

The rutlings had ever been a meek and kindly people. They were content in their burrows, eating the worms and grubs of the Earth, drinking from underground rivers that they themselves had dug. But when they found Men felling trees, BURNING trees, making shelters from their corpses,



they learned hatred. And they found the flesh of Men sweet beyond anything they had known.

The once-peaceful rutlings became ravenous hunters of Men, draping the trees' branches with their skins, watering the roots with their blood. They prayed to the great trees for their favor, begged them to sing, but despite the rutlings' brutal acts of devotion, the trees never sang again.

The rutlings never lost their taste for human flesh, and Men learned to fear the woods at night. Tales spread of man-eating devils pulling screaming travelers into the Earth, and banners of human skin found hanging from the trees in the morning. In time Men burned down great swaths of the wood, and as the trees died out, so did the rutlings.

The trees that grow now in the West are tiny things, mere whispers of their mighty forebears. The rutlings, too, have passed from the world. The very last of their kind was the timid little fellow NORGUL, who watched the race of Men for nearly two hundred years from the branches of silent trees, hardly able to recall the company of his own kind...wishing only for a friend.

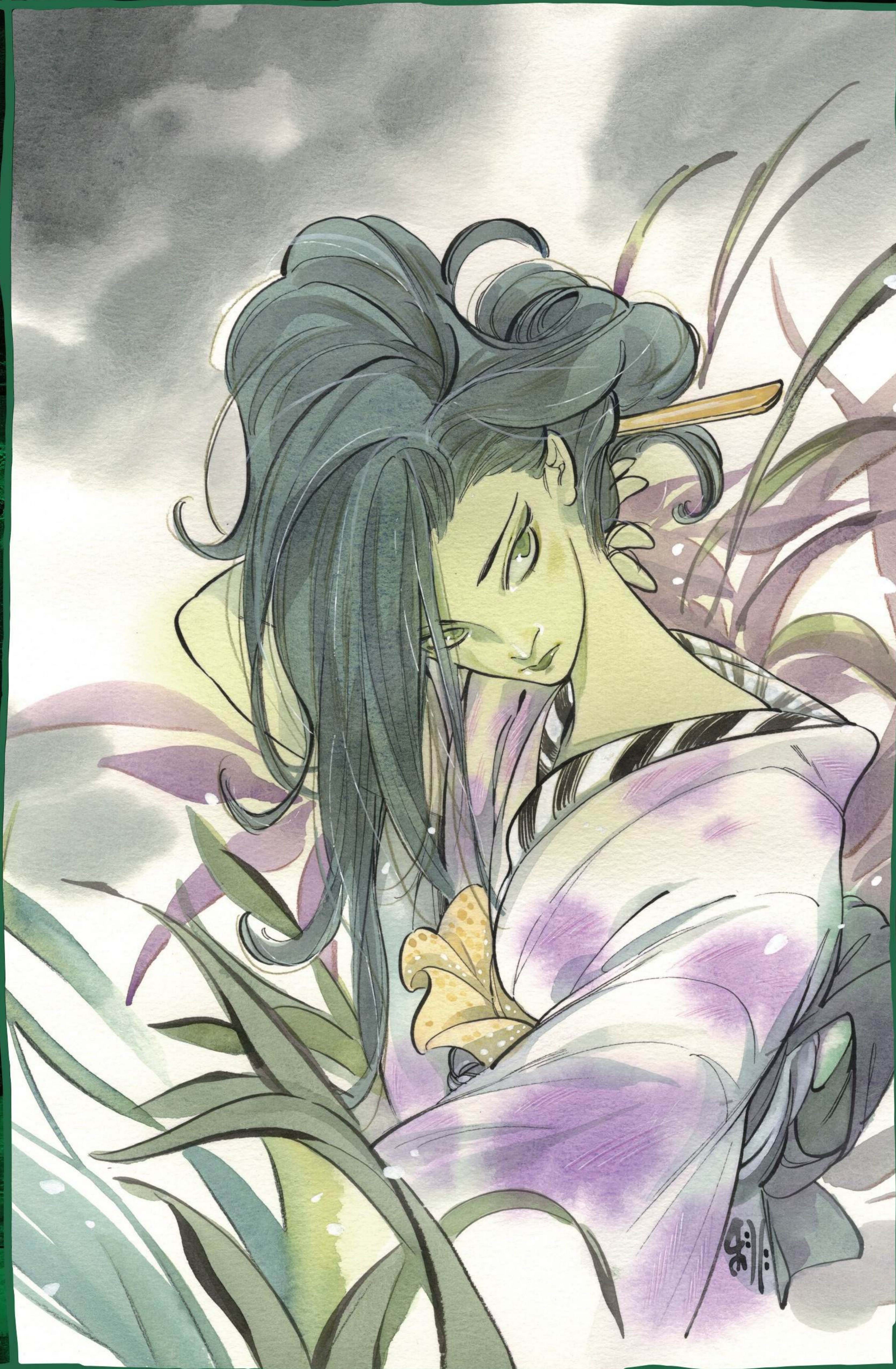
Until he was slain by the mortal calf Charlene Tidwell. Murderer of little Teelget, and of my beloved Lycana.

Though you be of the race of monsters now, Charlene Tidwell, I will not forget you.

You will see the face of Eldest again.



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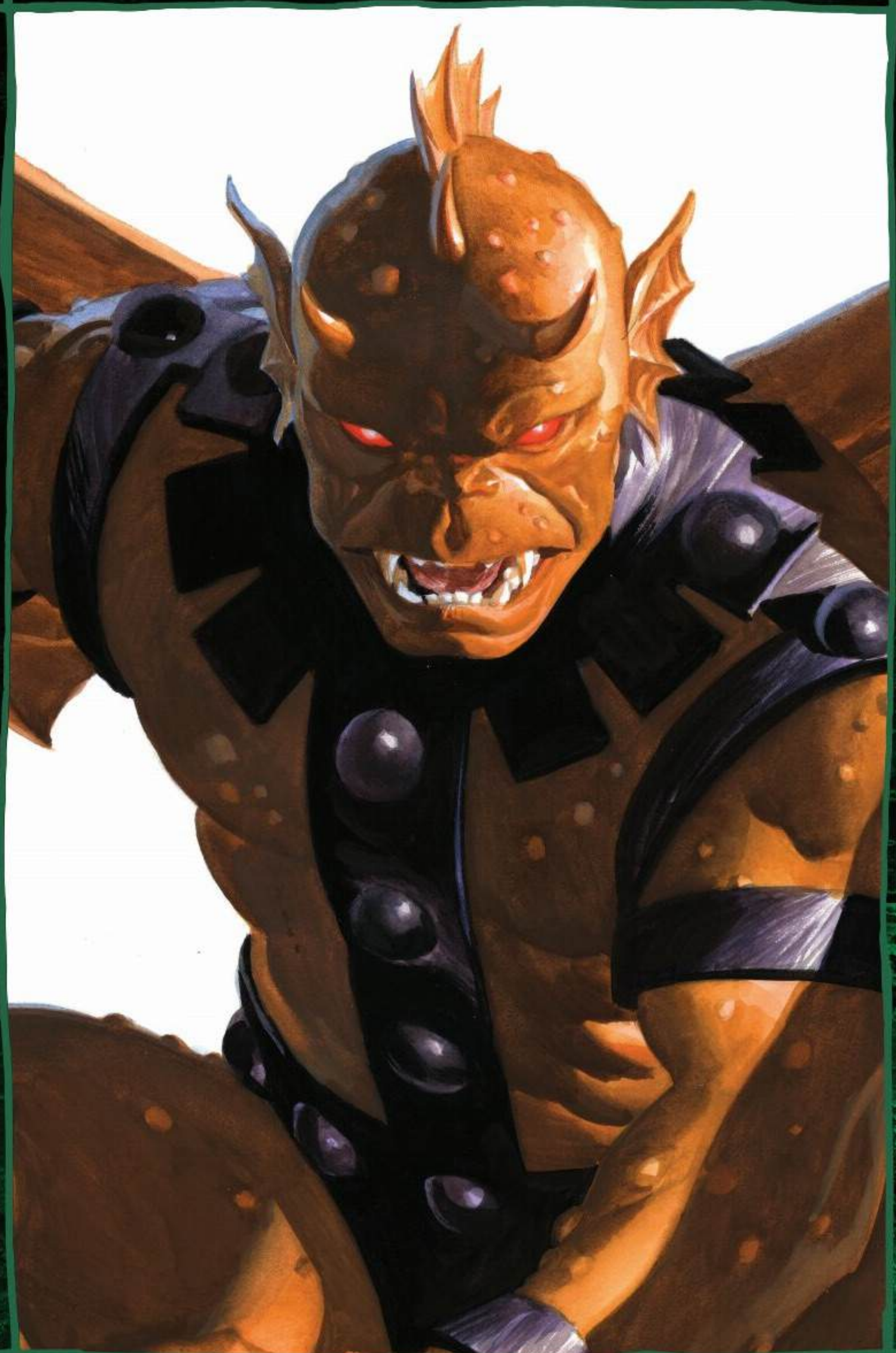


AND THE SURVIVOR OF THEIR
EPIC BATTLE MUST FACE --
the WENDIGO!

GIARRUSSO
ART BY
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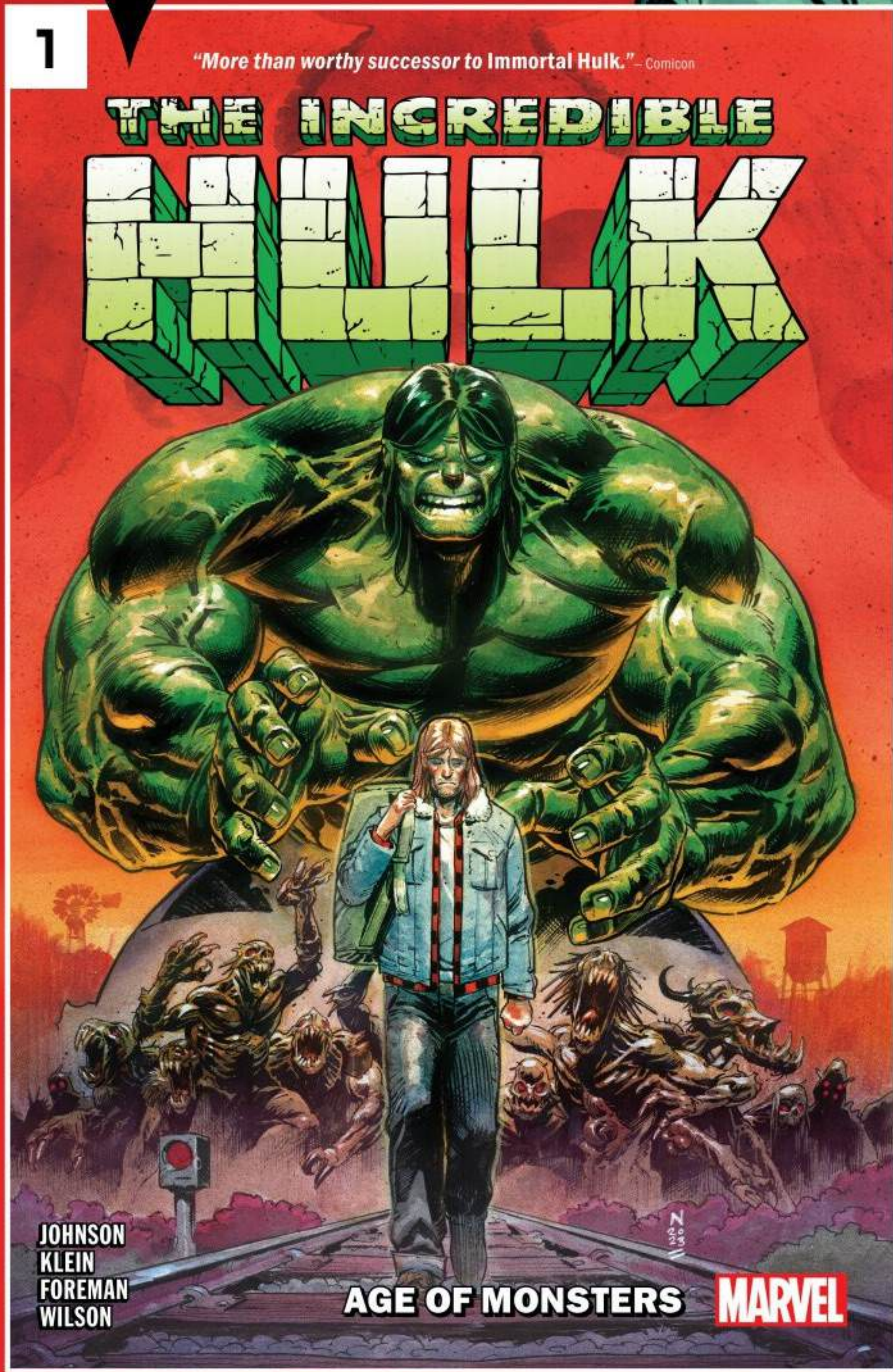
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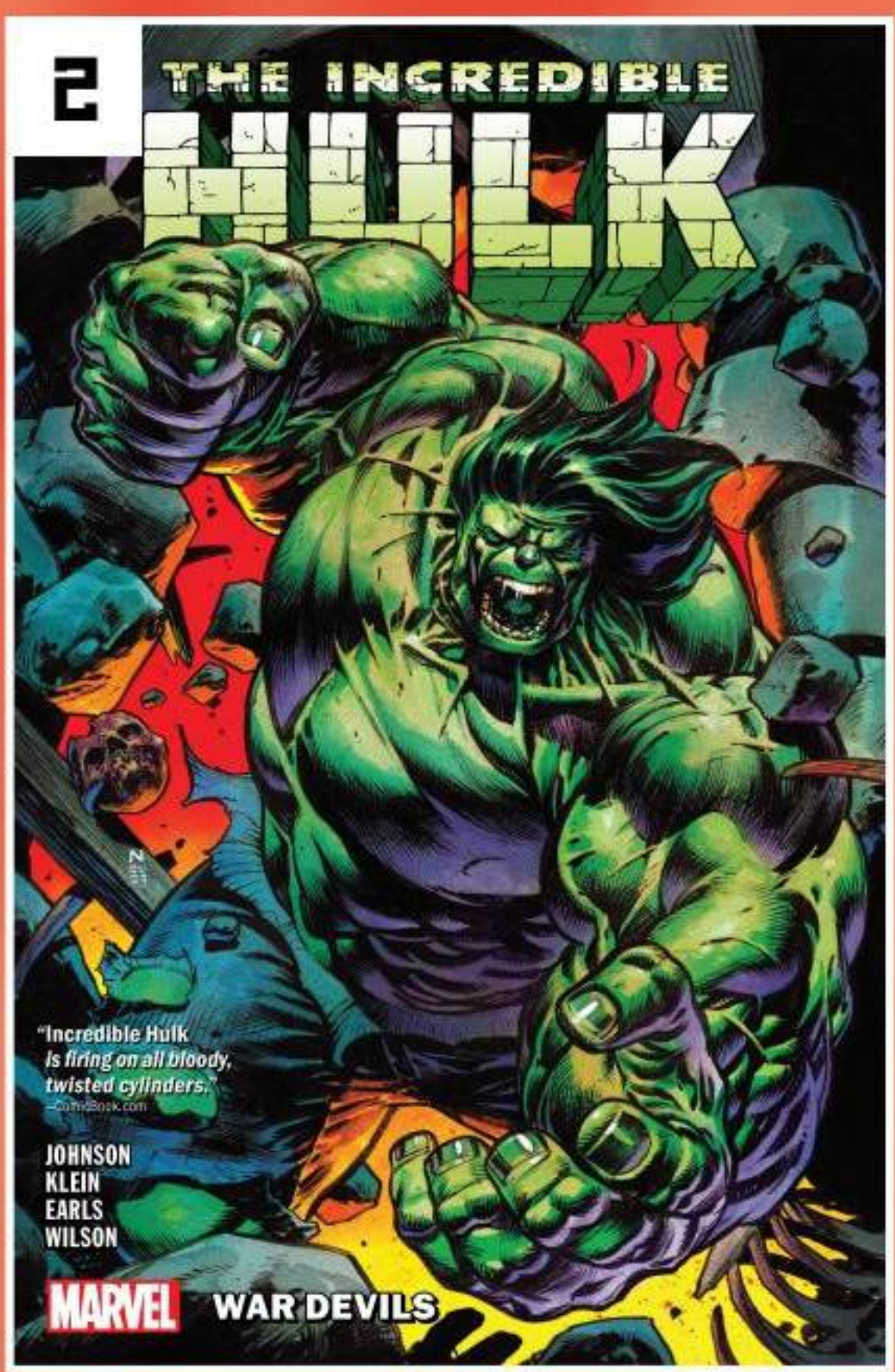


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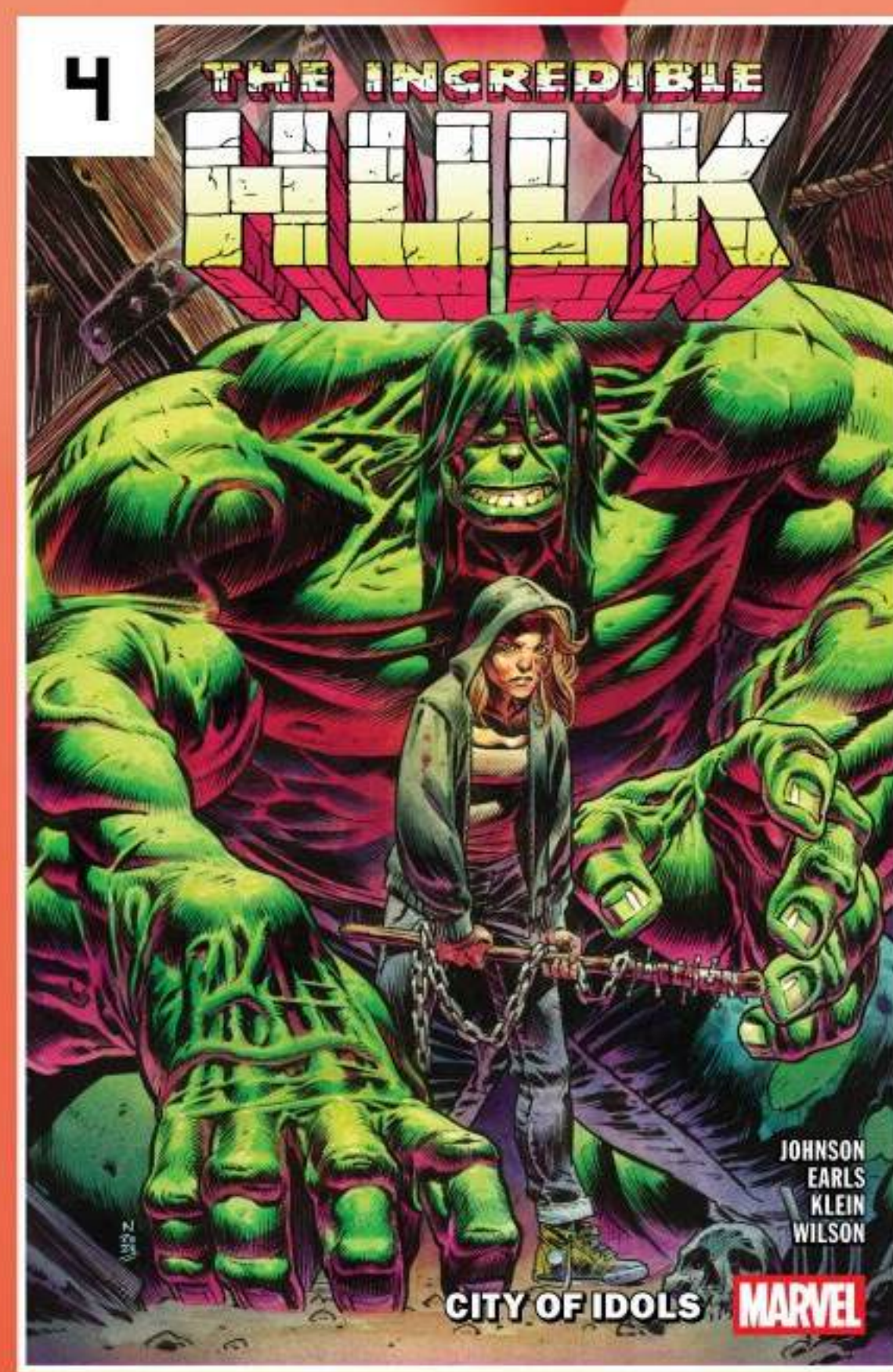
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